NAVAJO ADULT EDUCATION:

A COMPARISON OF TWO

INSTITUTIONS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE ISSUE OF MINORITY GROUP PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

> "Education is your most powerful weapon. With education, your are the white man's equal, without education, you are his victim" (Chief Plenty Coups, 1985).

American adult and continuing education programs have been predicated on the democratic and progressive view of education. Equal access and opportunity to participate in adult educational programs is considered by many a cornerstone of a democratic society (Apps, 1989; Griffith, 1989; Stubblefield and Keane, 1989). However, it has become clear to practitioners and scholars alike that minority adults do not access adult educational programs in proportion to their representation in the general United States population (Plank, 1994; Locke, 1992; Ogbu, 1990; Snyder, 1988; Hill, 1987).

As certain segments of the minority adult population in the United States continue to grow rapidly, data has indicated that the participation levels of these groups in organized, adult educational activities has failed to increase as well (United States Department of Education, 1991; Wilson and Carter, 1988; Hill, 1987). Demographic changes have also become evident in the workplace. As

Hodgkinson (1986) suggested the number of white, male workers is declining and the number of minority workers and women is increasing. The problem remains, however, that minority adults are not accessing adult educational opportunities to increase their skill and knowledge levels to "keep up" with changes in technology within the workplace. As Maril has suggested (1989) "this tends to relegate them to secondary positions in society" (p. 114).

Growing minority populations represent a national human resource, and the consequences to North American society of leaving this resource undeveloped are great. It is likely that young people who leave school early will never participate fully in society or the decision-making processes of government and other social institutions. The development, therefore, of effective strategies to serve minority adults must become a priority for all adult educators if the society of the future is to be viable (Van Hamme, 1996; Hornett, 1989; Briscoe and Ross, 1989).

Although there are many theoretical explanations for these decreased levels of participation among minority adults, one factor remains clear. The social and cultural contexts of the adult learner cannot be underestimated in program planning, development, and implementation. It is likely that as the level of understanding of scholars and

practitioners increases regarding minority adult participation, more effective models of delivery will emerge (Ross-Gordon, Martin and Briscoe, 1990).

Nature of the Problem

Minority groups in the United States exhibit comparatively low educational attainment levels when compared to the Anglo community (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993). Like the Black and Hispanic communities, the Native American adult student population, because of high drop-out rates, high rates of poverty, and poor educational experiences, is virtually non-participatory (Pavel and Padilla, 1993; Backes, 1993; Martin, 1987).

Past research has indicated, however, that those educational institutions that fully develop culturally and socially relevant programs are able to attract and retain higher numbers of minority students (Olneck, 1990 and Kramer, 1989). What is problematic, though, is current research fails to completely address the Native American adult student population, and particularly specific tribal adults, such as the Navajo, who reside on or near the reservation setting.

This research examines the dual issues of cultural and educational institutional structure factors as they relate

to Navajo adult students and their participation in post-secondary educational programs. Furthermore, this study addresses the problem of low participation rates among the Navajo adult population in two second-chance community college institutions.

Purpose of the Research

Although there is a plethora of published research on minority group participation in adult and continuing educational programs, very little work has been done on the Navajo adult participant (Beder and Valentine, 1990; Boshier and Collins, 1985; Boshier, 1971, 1973; Johnstone and Rivera, 1965; Houle, 1961). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to determine those key factors that contribute to the attraction and retention in adult and continuing education programs among Navajo adult students.

Fellenz and Conti (1990) have asserted that the social and cultural contexts of learning play a major part in whether a student of Native American heritage will participate in formalized programs of adult education. Furthermore, whether a Native American student will complete a program of study may in part be dictated by the cultural and social contexts of the program.

For example, Deyhle (1995) suggested that racial and

cultural conflicts among certain groups of Native Americans and the Anglo community lay at the center of school failure and low occupational success rates. Additionally, she asserted that the Native American community is often subjected to discrimination in the workplace and placed into a vocational curriculum in the school setting. With these ideas in mind, this study will attempt to determine how institutions can either impede or facilitate Navajo adult students' progress educationally.

Objectives of the Research

This research study focuses on the cultural and social issues of learning among one specific minority group, the Navajo, in two post-secondary educational institutions. Specifically, the research questions address the following:

1. How is participation among Navajo adults measured?
2. What are the institutional structural factors that inhibit or enhance participation among Navajo adults?
3. What are the cultural factors that inhibit or enhance participation among Navajo adults?
4. What types of programs or activities attract and retain Navajo adult students?

Scope and Limitations of the Study

In terms of these objectives, this research will focus on the tribal community college system of the Navajo Nation, and a community college located in a "border community" near the big Navajo reservation. Two institutional settings will be observed and adults within the service area, both in school and out, will be interviewed. The data for this project was accumulated over a period of approximately two years.

In terms of limitations, this study only researched two community college settings. The population under study consisted of predominantly Navajo adult students and non-students in addition to institutional administrators, faculty, and Native Program directors. Because of the ethnic differences between the researcher and the population under study, significant limitations existed in terms of language usage and interpretations. The potential for misinterpretation of cultural norms and values was high, thus, every attempt was made to correct any misinterpretations through the use of methodological triangulation.

This research also relied on convenience sampling as the primary data gathering approach. Therefore, another major limitation existed. Because random sampling could not

be performed with this particular population, the findings from this study cannot be generalized to other Native populations or minority groups.

The intent of this project was primarily exploratory, since no current research on the problem exists. Qualitative methods were employed in the gathering of the data, which, as stated previously, preclude any generalizability to other populations. Distinct conceptual categories were formulated as the data was gathered and analyzed which assisted in the establishment of future research directions on this topic.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this research, the following terms have been defined:

1. Native American Adult; a person, age 18 and older, who demonstrates Native American ancestry by being an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe. Each Native American tribe determines the criteria for membership on tribal rolls (Deloria and Lytle, 1984; O'Brien, 1989).
2. Cultural Factors; the values, beliefs, and norms that are derived from a particular ethnic group and practiced within a community setting (Kottak, 1997).

3. Institutional Structural Factors; the institutional policies, procedures and organizational norms that are found within the educational setting or institution under study (Pfeiffer, 1991).
4. Organized Adult Education; any type of organized program of education in which the primary participants are adults twenty-one years of age or older and who attend either part-time or full-time (Johnstone and Rivera, 1965).
5. Hispanic; individual whose ethnic background is from a Central or South American country (Pedraza and Rumbaut, 1996).
6. Anglo; individual whose ethnic background is white, non-Hispanic (Pedraza and Rumbaut, 1996).

Importance of the Study

Although the Native American population continues to increase nationwide, their participation in adult education has not experienced an increase in proportion to their growth figures. Moreover, little research has been performed on Native American adult students. This research sought to better explain participation and non-participation among the Navajo adult student population, but more specifically, did address the issues of cultural and

institutional structural factors as they related to participation among this population.

Perhaps the most compelling aspect of this project involved the implications for program planners and practitioners. Community college settings serve diverse populations. These populations do not exhibit homogenous characteristics, and adult students appear to experience different motivations for participating in post-secondary educational programs. The logistics of program planning, and the delivery of course work should benefit from the knowledge gained from this study, and quite possibly could increase participation among the Native student population as a result. Thus, this study should provide further insight into those factors that can enhance or deter Native adult students from participating in community college programs.

The next chapter reviews the literature related to this study as well as other studies which attempt to address the unique issues of participation in adult education programs among minority populations. Furthermore, cultural and historical issues of the Navajo people will be discussed. Additionally, various theoretical models of participation will be addressed.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND THE THEORETICAL FOCUS

> "Contrary to popular belief, education-the transmission and acquisition of knowledge and skills-did not come to the North American continent on the *Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria.* Education is as native to this continent as its Native people..." (Henrietta Whiteman, 1978).

Introduction

This chapter will discuss a variety of issues relevant to an understanding of Native American participation in adult and continuing education programs. To begin, an overview of the general Native American population and their educational characteristics will be discussed. Next, an in-depth analysis of the history and culture of the Four-Corners area and the Navajo population will serve as the focus. Finally, the chapter will finish with a thorough review of pertinent studies on participation research and the various theories of minority adult participation in educational activities.

Demographic Characteristics of Native Americans

In 1990, the total United States population of Native Americans stood at approximately 1,959,000. These figures

compare with 30 million Blacks, and 22.4 million Hispanics (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993). Research indicates that all minority groups differ significantly from the Anglo population in terms of poverty levels, educational attainment and occupations (Chavez, 1990; O'Hare, 1992; Roberts, 1994; Henslin, 1996).

Native Americans, however, exhibit extremely high rates of poverty and low educational levels when compared to other minorities. For example, nearly fifty percent of all Native American families fall below the official poverty line; their unemployment rate is the highest of all racial and ethnic groups; and only 65.5 percent of Native Americans of both genders finish high school (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993).

By comparison, the Hispanic population is the second largest ethnic minority group in the United States and comprises 8.5 percent of the total population. The Black population comprises approximately 12.8 percent of the total population (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993).

Hispanics and Blacks are 29 and 31 percent below the poverty line respectively. The labor force participation levels for these two groups is significantly less than that of Anglos. Blacks and Hispanics suffer from unemployment rates that are nearly double the rate of Anglos, which are

seven and eight percent respectively. Educationally, 63 percent of the Black community finished high school; while only 50 percent of all Hispanics finish high school (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993).

More than half of the Native American population in 1990 lived in the following six states: Oklahoma (252,000), California (242,000), Arizona (204,000), New Mexico (134,000), Alaska (86,000), and Washington State (81,000). The largest recognized tribes are the Navajo, Cherokee, Chippewa, and Sioux (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993).

Moreover, the total Native American population has exhibited substantial growth in the last forty years. For example, Stuart (1987) has indicated that the Native population jumped from 377,173 in 1950 to 1,420,400 in 1980. Furthermore, Hodgkinson (1992) stated that the Native American population increased over 500,000 in number from 1980 to 1990.

Approximately 39 percent of the American Indian population is under the age of 20, compared with 29 percent of the Nation's total population. About eight percent of the Native population is over the age of 60, compared with upwards of 13 percent of the general U.S. population. This illustrates that the Native American population is

comparatively younger than the overall United States population (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993).

The birth and mortality rates for Native Americans are substantially higher than for the Anglo population. For instance, the birth rate for Native Americans is 1.8 percent higher and the mortality rate is 37 percent greater than the United States population as a whole. The two leading causes of death for all Indian Health Service (IHS) areas are "diseases of the heart" and "accidents and adverse effects". In 1989, the life expectancy at birth for both Native American males and females was approximately 68.2 years which is 6.7 years less than for the general United States population (Indian Health Service, 1993).

Clearly, this evidence suggests that the Native American population as a whole is younger, poorer, and less healthy than the general American population. Additionally, their quality of life and standard of living is substantially affected by these complex issues (Gonzales, 1990).

Educational Characteristics of Native Americans

Indian education became regulated by Federal Indian policy in 1889, when the commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) set forth several principles of

education policy, one of which was that Indians must be prepared for assimilation through compulsory education. The Federal government continued to control a significant portion of Indian education even after some tribes developed their own systems. During this time, the emphasis in educational settings was placed on English language acquisition and "civilization" of the Indian student. By the 1970's, however, only one-quarter of American Indian children attended federally controlled schools (United States Department of Education, 1987).

The educational attainment levels of American Indians improved significantly during the 1980's, but remained considerably below the levels of the total population. In 1990, 65.5 percent of American Indians 25 years old and over were high school graduates or higher compared with only 56 percent in 1980. This compares with a national high school completion rate in 1990 of 75 percent. American Indians were also not as likely to have completed a bachelor's degree, with only nine percent completing four years of college or higher in 1990 compared with 20 percent of the total United States population (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993).

In analyzing the descriptive statistics of Native American participation in other types of educational

settings, such as two year degree programs, the data indicate that their enrollment rates are comparable to or lower than other minority groups. In comparing the number of associate degrees that were earned nationwide, the Native American population earned fewer than any other racial or ethnic group. Of those who earned a bachelor's degree, the majority were in the fields of education, health professions, and business management. The percentage distribution of total enrollment for 1992 in all institutions of higher education for Native Americans was a mere 0.8 percent. This compares with 75.0 percent for Anglos, 9.6 percent for Blacks and 6.6 percent for Hispanics (United States Department of Education, 1994).

In the case of adult education among American Indian students, past research has cited a number of reasons for non-retention and high dropout rates. McDonald suggested (1978)

> ...that financial hardship, inferior quality elementary and secondary education, discrimination and the lack of role models as reasons for non-completion in higher educational programs among Native American students (p.73).

Deyhle (1995) asserted that poor performance among Native American students was the result of a constant

struggle between Anglos and Native Americans for jobs and power within their communities. Additionally, she suggested that Native American students were encouraged to pursue training that does not result in job placement. Other studies have reiterated these problems in addition to the issues of language difficulties, environmental adjustment, and cultural and social conflicts (United States Department of Education, 1987).

To conclude, this analysis of the condition of Native America in terms of their demographic trends and educational characteristics demonstrates that the Native American population continues to differ significantly from Anglo America in many categories. Specifically, their population is growing substantially, yet they continue to exhibit low rates of educational and occupational success in comparison with other minority groups and in proportion to their overall numbers in the general U.S. population.

The next section of this chapter will focus attention on the Four-Corners area and the specific Native tribe under study, the Navajo. Additionally, an overview of the rich history and culture of the area and the Navajo tribe will begin the discussion. Further, an analysis of the Navajo population and its educational characteristics will offer a point of departure for the discussion of Navajo adult

participation in educational activities. Furthermore, tentative explanations for non-participation will be discussed.

Four-Corners and the Navajo: History and Culture

The Four Corners country of the Southwest is a land of striking contrasts. It is a land whose inhabitants have felt the tremendous dictates of the weather, the seasons, and the influence of three distinct cultures. The Native tribes, the Spanish, and American homesteaders have all played a significant part in the development of the area (MacDonald and Arrington, 1970). This study will focus on one specific population that has lived in the area for hundreds of years, the Navajo.

The Navajo Nation covers 16.2 million acres or (25,351 square miles) in the heart of the Four-Corners region. Dine' Bike'yah or Navajoland is larger than the entire state of West Virginia and is situated on the Colorado Plateau. The climate is semi-arid to arid (Navajo Nation Profile, 1995; Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1974).

The Navajo form the largest Native American tribe in the United States with a total population of approximately 161,405. The Navajo Tribal Government stands as the largest and most sophisticated form of American Indian government

today and offers a variety of social, health, and educational services to the Navajo people (Navajo Nation Profile, 1995).

With a median age of 22.3 years and a median family income of 11,885.00 dollars per year, the resident Navajo population comparatively is younger and poorer than the median American age of 33 years with an annual median income of 35,225.00 dollars per year (Navajo Nation Profile, 1995; United States Bureau of the Census, 1993). The percentage of Navajo families who reside below the poverty level is 56.1 percent. Well over half of all Navajo households lack complete plumbing and kitchen facilities, and the unemployment rate for this population stands at 27.9 percent of the total possible labor force (Navajo Nation Profile, 1995).

Although the Navajo people suffer socioeconomic disadvantage when compared to Anglo America, theirs is a culture rich in history and tradition. For instance, historically, anthropologists and tribal elders have differed on how the Navajo came to inhabit the Four-Corners area of the American Southwest. According to Kluckhohn and Leighton (1974), there are many indications that the Navajo and the various Apache groups originally came from the north. The "Dine'" or "The People", as the Navajo call

themselves, share the Athapascan language spoken by the different Apache tribes and a group of tribes in the interior of Northwestern Canada.

While there is no written history among the Navajo of how they came to reside in the Four-Corners area, oral traditions suggest that their Holy People put four sacred mountains in four different directions, Mt. Blanca sits in the east, Mt. Taylor to the south, San Francisco Peak to the west, and Mt. Hesperus in the north. This area was created to form Navajoland or Dine'tah. The Holy People are believed to have the power to aid or harm the Earth People. The Earth People are an integral part of the universe, but they must do all in their power to maintain harmony and balance with Mother Earth and Father Sky. Harmony and balance please the Holy People (Dine'-The Navajo People, July, 1996).

Anthropologists, however, believe that the Navajo had migrated to the American Southwest around 1000 A.D. Hogan ruins have been located in the Chaco Canyon area which indicate that ancestors of the Navajo had entered the region of the Anasazi as early as 900 A.D. (Locke, 1992). The anthropological view of Navajo migration from the North coincides with the Navajo oral tradition which suggests that they are descendants of the Anasazi (Tatro, 1997).

According to Kluckhohn and Leighton (1974) the first known reference to the Navajos in a European document was found in the report of a Franciscan missionary in 1626. By this time, the Dine' were already considered agriculturalists, and were no longer migratory. The Navajo, who lived in small, compact communities, farmed and raised sheep and goats. During this Spanish-Mexican period, altercations between the Navajo, the Pueblo peoples, and the European settlers were infrequent.

During the Civil War period in American history, the Navajo had greater exposure to and experiences with American settlers and the U.S. Army. The Navajo-Anglo-American era was not entirely fruitful for the Navajo, and culminated in their removal to Bosque Redondo in 1864 (Hester, 1962). The removal is known to the "People" as the "Long Walk", in which 8,000 Navajo people were forced into captivity at Fort Sumner, New Mexico (Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1974).

The Bosque Redondo period was characterized by the establishment of new political and economic ties with the federal government. The Navajo were no longer masters of their own fate, rather, they became a "subject people" governed by men of another culture. The forced removal and subsequent incarceration of the Navajo people resulted in the beginnings of bilingualism, acculturation, and an

overall sense of "marginality" (Hester, 1962).

Subsequently, contemporary times have seen many changes occur among the Navajo people. The Tribal government is striving to sustain a viable economy for an ever-increasing population of about 200,000, while at the same time nurturing their centuries old cultural heritage (Dine'-The Navajo People, July, 1996).

What continues to be problematic is that many themes in Anglo culture directly conflict with those found in the Navajo culture. For example, Christianity, monogamy, a strong centralized political system, a cash economy, and compulsory formal schooling have all played an important part in the increase of anxiety brought about by having to choose between traditional norms and values and Anglo norms and values. This constant conflict has resulted in a polarization within the Navajo tribe. The traditionalists, those who hold to traditional Navajo "ways", and the progressives, those who have embraced the right of the Tribal government to direct the future of the Navajo people, are frequently at odds with one another (Hester, 1962; Locke, 1992).

In terms of other cultural norms and values, the traditional Navajo people differ from the Anglo population on many counts. For example, the family is considered

sacred. Thus the provision of care for one's elders and or small children is considered more important than the acquisition of material wealth or the pursuance of personal ambition (Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1974). Additionally, Navajo daily life is guided by their belief system and dependence on natural forces. Harmony and balance are important indicators of health and overall well-being among the Navajo people (Kerr, 1996).

Navajo Educational Characteristics

The educational attainment levels of the Navajo people reflect the same general characteristics as the overall Native American population. For instance, 36.4 percent of all Navajos over the age of 25 years have a ninth grade or less education level. 24.2 percent of this same population have attained a high school diploma, while a mere 10.4 percent have attempted some post-secondary education. However, only 1.9 percent of the total Navajo population has earned a bachelor's degree of any type (Navajo Nation Profile, 1995).

The Navajo Tribal government, as well as, the Bureau of Indian Affairs maintains numerous day and boarding schools across the reservation for elementary and secondary students. Additionally, a tribally operated community

college system, located at seven different sites, serves the post-secondary and adult learning needs of the Navajo tribe (Navajo Community College Institutional Report, 1994-1995).

Despite these educational resources, the Navajo adult population continues to exhibit below national average literacy and high school completion rates. Wolfe (1992) has suggested that many Navajo young adults are recruited by private, entrepreneurship schools where they are encouraged to sign expensive contracts for a four to six month specialized educational program. The tribal bureaucratic structure facilitates this process by encouraging these individuals to enroll, just so the JTPA rolls can experience closure. However, most of these individuals are not educationally prepared to achieve successfully in these programs, and eventually drop out. They are incapable of repaying the financial assistance that they received.

Demographic characteristics and prior educational experiences of Native Americans point to the necessity of continued research if practitioners hope to increase Native American participation rates in adult and continuing education programs. Additionally, theories of participation are likely to be enhanced as greater evidence is gathered on the unique characteristics of the Native American adult learner. Thus, the following section will analyze several

prominent models of participation in adult and continuing education programs, in addition to Native American models of learning and educational participation.

Research on Adult Education Participation

Participation research has increased within the last few decades. For the most part, this research has concentrated on characteristics of the average participant, what deters them from pursuing further education, and what factors increase the probability of their attendance. An analysis of these research endeavors will now be undertaken.

Cyril Houle's explanation of participation is considered by many as one of the first major departures from the descriptive, survey type research that had previously been conducted (Courtney, 1992). Houle developed his typology of participants which consisted of the following: "the goal-oriented learner, the activity-oriented learner and the learning-oriented participant" based on a series of interviews with 22 persons in the Chicago area. The sample was not representative of the general U.S. population and included only one non-Anglo individual (Houle, 1961, p.13).

Houle's typology attempts to explain the various motivations for why adults pursue educational activities. The goal-oriented learner uses education as a means of

attaining other goals. The activity-oriented learner participates for the activity itself and for interaction with other learners. The learning-oriented participant engages in educational activities for the sake of learning (Houle, 1961). Houle's work stimulated further study on the motivations behind adult learning including a large number of surveys.

Based on the early work of Boshier (1971 and 1973), Boshier and Collins (1985), for example, conducted an extensive survey on adult participation in education. Their study involved the use of the Education Participation Scale (EPS). The EPS consisted of forty items which centered around six different factors. These factors included: social relationships, external expectations, social welfare, professional advancement, escape-stimulation and cognitive interest. This study was one of the more extensive projects undertaken that replicated, in part, Houle's typology and focused on both personal and social forces.

The Cross (1981) "Chain of Response" model provides another conceptualization of motivation to participate in adult and continuing education programs. According to this model, participation is not a single response to information about an educational activity, but rather a chain of responses, each based on evaluation of the position of the

individual in his or her environment. The premise is that if an adult doubts that participating in the educational experience will lead to any tangible changes in his or her life situation, the motivation to participate may decline.

Anderson and Darkenwald (1979), Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984), and Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) went a step further in their conceptualizations of participation. The (DPS) "Deterrents to Participation Scale", which was formulated through these studies, assessed the factors that form the foundation for non-participation in adult and continuing educational programs. The primary deterrents to participation that emerged from these analyses were found to be: personal problems, lack of confidence, educational costs, lack of interest in organized education, or lack of interest in available courses.

Another of the more prominent efforts that attempted to explain participation was presented by Miller (1967). Miller's Force-Field Analysis was based on "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs" (1954) and Lewin's "Force-Field" theory (1947). Miller's perspective viewed participation in educational activities as the end result between social and personal forces that "cause" individuals to seek further education or "deter" them from pursuing learning as an organized activity.

Rubenson's model (1977) of participation draws from both psychological motivation theories and the perspectives of Miller and Boshier. This "Expectancy-Valence" model stipulates that the decision to participate is a combination of the negative and positive forces within the individual and the environment.

For Rubenson, the individual serves as the center of the model because everything depends on his or views of the environment and the value that participation may have for them. The value of participation is a factor that has been determined through prior socializing agents, such as the family, community, and school. Thus, this model suggests that the value of adult education and participation is learned through lifelong socialization. This can, in part, explain why some groups value participation and others do not (Rubenson, 1977).

The problem with many of these theories continues to lie in the idea that very little testing has yet to be performed on each of them (Merriam and Caffarella, 1991). Additionally, each of these perspectives continues the focus on psychosocial factors regarding motivation and participation within the Anglo community or within non-American populations. Clearly, however, these models have established a link between self-evaluation and self-concept

in terms of individual inclination to pursue further education or training.

As Johnstone and Rivera (1965) suggested over thirty years ago, organized adult education in the United States was essentially the social domain of white, middle-class, American men and women. However, their study did not include any ethnic or racial minorities other than Afro-American. Moreover, Courtney (1992) has asserted that individuals who had not completed high school and those who occupied manual, blue-collar occupations were far less likely to participate in adult education programs. Additionally, he suggested that adult education may, in fact, continue to widen the gap between the various social classes in society.

These aforementioned research perspectives frequently have been used as the foundation for further research into participation. However, none of these models has completely addressed the issue of minority non-participation in adult education activities. For example, Houle's typology was developed based on interviews with twenty-two, urban, adults who considered themselves and were considered by others as motivated adult learners. Darkenwald and Scanlan's "DPS" model was predicated on studies performed on representative samples of Allied Health professionals in New Jersey. In

effect, all of these participation models have been formulated from information gathered on relatively homogeneous (Anglo) samples. Thus, they have very little applicability to ethnic minorities in the United States.

Substantial explanations for minority non-participation are few. Additionally, very little research has explored the relationship between participation in adult education and the socio-cultural environments of minority groups. With this in mind, this research has focused on the application of critical theory to the issues surrounding minority non-participation in adult education. The next section of this literature review will explore the potential of critical theory for explaining the low rates of participation among the various minority groups in the United States.

Applying Critical Theory to Adult Education Participation

Although the various models of participation offer much toward the development of a better understanding of adult educational pursuits, these models have been predicated on the "white, middle-class" experience. Moreover, minority and other disenfranchised groups in society continue to be under-represented in adult education programs. The critical perspective, however, has exhibited potential for a greater

explanation regarding the phenomenon of low participation rates among the nation's different minority groups.

The critical perspective was established in Germany after World War II. Turner (1991) suggested that the basic tenets of critical theory can be applied to the further study of participation research because they actively seek to "describe historical forces that continue to dominate human freedom and expose ideological justifications of those forces" (p. 257).

Habermas (1970), one of the founders of the critical perspective, suggested that for a critique to be useful in liberating people from domination, it becomes necessary for the critique to be couched in terms of the fundamental processes that integrate social systems. Moreover, in his discussion of interaction, he suggested that in the very process of interaction lies the potential for rational discourse. Rational discourse can be used to create a more just, open, and free society by causing actors to implicitly assess and critique one another in terms of effectiveness, normative appropriateness, and sincerity of interaction. Thus, Habermas, asserted that emancipatory potential is inherent in each and every interaction.

Another important aspect of Habermas' theoretical perspective involves the concept of "lifeworld" (1979,

p.205). He stated that the three components of the lifeworld were culture, society, and personality. These three components, through the process of human interaction, enabled the individuals involved to reach understanding and effect socialization. Habermas further suggested that rational discourse provided the avenue by which the lifeworld sustained and reproduced itself.

Thus, built into the integrating processes of complex social life, is the potential for a critical theory that seeks to restore communicative rationality or rational discourse in spite of highly impersonal social forces and mechanisms. For example, when collective frustration over the lack of meaning in social life occurs, critical theory can motivate individuals to restore the proper balance between individual lifeworlds and conflicting social processes.

Many social and educational theorists have applied the various tenets of critical theory, and the work of Habermas to the study of participation in adult education. For example, Apple (1982) found that the structure of symbols and of knowledge in educational institutions was that of the dominant culture and was therefore intimately related to the principles and practices of cultural and social control.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) have suggested that the

educational system in the United States is an integral element in the reproduction of the dominant class value system. From this perspective, adult education is viewed as replicating the hegemonic practices of pre-adult education, even among culturally different adults. Thus the status quo of society is maintained even in adult education programs.

Educational sociologists have suggested that the social reproduction theory of education explains this phenomenon in terms of economic, cultural, or hegemonic dominance. This view focuses on the function of schooling in the reproduction of labor stratification and power differentials among classes in society (Giroux, 1983; and Bernstein, 1971).

Other critical theorists (Freire, 1970; Gramsci, 1971 and Apple, 1978) also believe that schooling serves the interests of the dominant group in society. Individuals, however, have the power, through dialogue and discourse, to structure their own identities and ameliorate the oppressive nature of the institutions in which they live. This perspective, thus, attempts to integrate both the macrostructural and microinteractional approaches in the study of schooling.

Questions are often raised, however, regarding the applicability of reproduction and critical theories to non-

compulsory participation such as that found in adult education. However, individual student perceptions of adult education indicate that these programs typically are not different from their K through 12 educational experiences in terms of content and delivery (Quigley, 1990).

Keddie (1980), Fine (1985) and Quigley (1990) have maintained that adult education is more similar than dissimilar to the rest of education in its forms of cultural reproduction. Fine (1985) has continued to assert that societal inequities have forced many minority students out of the traditional educational structure, which in turn has promoted a feeling of inadequacy and has reduced any further expectations of education. Additionally, educators of adults have neglected to challenge the modes by which education controls differential access to knowledge and power. Quigley (1990) has called for the development of alternate programs which are "grounded in acceptable and relevant values and cultural systems by seeking learning possibilities with resisters and their significant others" (p.113).

Another critical view of adult learning and education is that of Mezirow (1990). His transformation theory implied that adult learning involves the imaginative projection of value-laden symbolic models onto the learner's

sense perceptions in order to construe the meaning of experience. This process is filtered through meaning perspectives, which are sets of learned assumptions that regulate perception and cognition. These meaning perspectives are often shaped by sociocultural forces such as norms, values, language usage, and learning styles. He also asserts that certain meaning perspectives are more functional than others in terms of how they promote aspects of learning.

Rational discourse is paramount in terms of its application to adult learning within the transformation model. Mezirow (1991) states that:

> rational discourse differs from ordinary dialogue in that there is an intentional effort made by those involved to set aside preconceptions and biases in favor of objective analysis and to attempt to responsibly weigh the evidence, assess the arguments and critically examine the assumptions behind them (p. 189).

Because adult learning occurs within the context of the dominant culture's normative and value system, the idea of rational discourse being practiced within educational settings is vital. As Giroux (1985) stated educators must become a part of the learning process, not just the

"director" of how others ought to learn and what ought to be learned. Pedagogical practices should incorporate the political arena into schooling by arguing that schooling represents both a struggle to define meaning and a struggle over power relations. Critical reflection and action become a part of a fundamental social project to help students develop a deep and abiding faith in the struggle to overcome economic, political and social injustices, and to further humanize themselves as part of this struggle.

According to Mezirow (1991) every adult educator has a responsibility for fostering critical self-reflection and helping learners take actions. Indeed, educators of disenfranchised groups should lend themselves to the promotion of transformative learning. Educators of these adults would do well to promote rational discourse in order to further assist their students' development of meaning. These educators must work to create the conditions that give students the opportunity to become citizens who have the knowledge and courage to struggle in order to make despair unconvincing and hope practical.

According to Giroux (1985) "by providing educational settings which promote rational discourse, educators can unite the language of critique with the language of possibility for all under-served adult students" (p. 379).

Thus, educators are viewed as holding the key to emancipation for the disenfranchised groups of society.

Another concept that is fundamental to the critical view of education and social process is the idea of empowerment. Empowerment refers to the process by which an individual or group experiences the state of awareness of an ability or capacity to act (Ashcroft, 1987). Freire suggested (1973) that empowerment referred to the act of "giving men [sic] back their power to act effectively for themselves" (p. 71). Critical perception is a factor in the empowerment issue. If individuals or groups can perceive of themselves within the grand scheme of society, they can critically analyze their overall position.

Empowerment as a philosophy of education is vital to any program that provides learning opportunities to minority group members. Empowering as a fundamental of practice must balance its commitments to personal growth and to society, recognizing that while personal power is primary it is also prerequisite to societal contribution (Ashcroft, 1987).

An empowering philosophy of education promotes critical learning, creative thinking, integration, and synthesis. Additionally, this philosophical approach assists students in developing their problem solving skills while working cooperatively with others. Inherent within this particular

perspective is the understanding that students and teachers develop ideas cooperatively, and that the teacher is as much a part of the learning process as the students (Freire, 1973).

According to Freire (1970) "education is never neutral; it either oppresses or liberates" (p. 27). The development of a critical consciousness is a primary factor in the educational process for disenfranchised student populations. This concept is similar to Mezirow's idea of "critical reflectivity" (1981) in that the student and the teacher assist each other in the identification of cultural forces which impede or accelerate cognitive development.

Shor (1988) has indicated that students must be active and critical in the process of learning new skills or knowledge. Additionally, he suggested that all students should be viewed as complicated and substantial human beings who can bring as much to the educational event as the event brings to them. Thus, programs which preserve the cultural distinctness of minorities and which recognize the various types of learning styles appear to be much more effective than those that promote the dominant culture's ideology and normative system (Ross-Gordon, Martin and Briscoe, 1990).

Moreover, programs that promote critical learning, personal transformation, and empowerment among individual

students recognize that the main barriers to improved participation are both social, as well as, political. The relationship between a paternalistic educational structure and poor participation is a very real phenomenon (Star-Blanket, 1979). Individual motivation to participate is predicated not only on psychological reasons but social ones as well.

Native American Participation in Adult Education

Although there remains a paucity of information on the issue of minority adult participation in educational activities, Ogbu (1990) and others have attempted to formulate a cultural explanation for low-participation rates. Ogbu's model suggests that the experiences and perceptions of U.S. minorities are shaped by the initial terms of their incorporation into American society and their subsequent treatment by White Americans.

This perspective is composed of three educationally relevant groups: the autonomous minorities, the immigrant minorities, and the castelike minorities. Although all three groups experience prejudice and discrimination in all social arenas, it is the castelike minority that experiences the brunt of inequality. The castelike minorities are involuntary minorities, and were either coerced or conquered

upon their initial interactions with the dominant group in American society. The Black, some Hispanic groups and the Native American population are all considered prime examples of the castelike minority group (Ogbu, 1990).

Because the castelike type is considered an involuntary minority, the affects of the dominant culture on the planning and delivery of adult education is typically ineffective. Ogbu (1990) pointed out that the history of oppression and struggle experienced by these groups predisposes them to resist most educational programs. The cultural context upon which many of these programs are designed is perceived as an embodiment of the very culture that suppresses them. These groups are difficult, then, to recruit and retain.

As Orlansky and Trapp suggested (1987) "professionals who work with Native American students should receive in-service and pre-service training and school personnel should act as liaisons between the Native American community and the school" (p.153). Also, educators of adults should be aware that the Native American community recognizes the importance of balance and harmony within the self and the community as one of its basic values (Tatro, 1997).

Pratt (1988) noted that many Native learners expect to transmit their newly acquired skills and knowledge to others

in their communities. As part of an oral tradition that has been experienced for centuries, the Native American adult is encouraged by programs and educators that appreciate the significance of open communication. Learning environments that are shaped on trust and support are also necessary for recruitment and retention among Native students.

Kleinfeld (1975) suggested that the holistic approach to Native American programming is consistent with many tribal views of human harmony with nature and the universe. For example, "Native elders teach that a human being has four interrelated capacities; the physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental and any change in one of these parts can bring about disharmony and imbalance" (Kleinfeld, 1975, p. 308). Research on Native learners supports the contention that a holistic or global approach to learning is common within the Native culture.

Fellenz and Conti (1990), Reyhner (1992) and others have continually maintained that the social and the cultural contexts of the learner are inclusive of any "real learning". Participatory and emancipatory learning engage learners, and pushes them toward reflection and meaningful interpretation. Thus, learners in participatory efforts help to define, create, and maintain the learning

environment in accordance with their own unique normative and value systems.

Obviously, any attempt then to attract the Native American adult to educational programs must demonstrate a desire to accept differences among values and norms. Among these are the issues of harmony, mutual support, and the oral tradition. Individualism and competition have no place in a program of learning for the Native American student (Navajo Community College Institutional Report, 1994-1995).

Native American students exhibit characteristics in learning styles that differentiate them from the Anglo student. One of the more common problems that educators of adults must recognize is the issue of cooperation and the necessity of personal privacy. Orlansky and Trapp (1987) have indicated that programs which emphasize competition and majority rule do not serve the Native student well. Activities that promote individualism and stress "winning" negatively impact the Native community. However, tutoring has been found to relieve group competition and is very effective in the teaching of basic skills to Native students.

Bryant (1986) and Karlebach (1986) proposed using the modeling approach as articulated by Bandura (1986, p.100) in teaching Native students. The formation of imagery

associated with the teaching of values is a particularly helpful method of delivery. Observation and personal experiencing are also effective modes of teaching.

More (1987) added that any learning must be made meaningful in order for the Native student to make the most use of the information. This implies that educators of Native students must provide opportunities for the individual student to reflect and communicate the relationship between new knowledge and past experiences.

Clearly, past research has indicated that an enormous challenge faces educators of American Indian students. This challenge involves the maintenance of culturally traditional bonds while also providing preparation for successful participation in a culturally diverse, modern technological society (Van Hamme, 1996).

According to Briscoe and Martin-Ross (1989) the factors that appear to contribute to majority non-participation affect minority populations as well. For example, factors such as: institutional, situational, and personal issues can all effectively inhibit participation in an educational program. These issues require continued critical reflection among service providers.

Moreover, in addition to the aforementioned factors, such problems as ability grouping and tracking in pre-adult

educational settings; insensitivity to cultural differences; language barriers; and lack of minority faculty and staff also negatively impact minority participation (Fraga, Meier and England, 1986; Samuels, 1985; and Valverde, 1987).

Minority adults continue to view education apart from learning. Their participation rates continue, as well, to fall well below the majority student rates, although certain minority groups are experiencing increases in their overall population numbers (Deloria, 1981). Thus, educators of adults must continue to examine the perceived barriers to minority participation and develop culturally relevant programs and opportunities.

Native American Participation: Reviewing Past Research

The learning process and participation in adult educational activities are not merely personal issues, but social and cultural ones for Native American students. However, as the literature indicates, most of the research in the field of participation is predicated on the Anglo adult participant. This problem continues to cloud the explanations for low participation rates among minority students, and more particularly for Native American students.

For Native American adult learners, the act of

participating in any type of educational endeavor must demonstrate a distinct social and cultural relativeness in order for the process to be considered useful to them (Navajo Community College Report, 1994-1995). Learning can be beneficial to them if it positively relates to their families and communities. Therefore, continued research on program planning and delivery methods should provide an increased understanding of the unique social, cultural and learning characteristics of the Native student. This research is necessary if participation among this population is to improve.

For example, Ziegahn (1992) performed a qualitative project which focused on the learning motivations of illiterate and poorly literate adults. Moreover, this research was performed in a rural, reservation community in Montana. The purpose of this study was to "...explore the forces around learning, literacy, and participation among adults who were poor readers" (p. 30). Her findings suggested that positive motivators toward learning were not relegated entirely to the literate middle-class. Furthermore, the "culture" of school and schooling transcended any ethnic or cultural perspectives on literacy and learning. Learning and schooling were viewed as synonymous.

While little research has been performed on American Indian adult learners, many studies have been conducted on various aspects of American Indian educational programs for children (Wax, 1970). For example, Wax, Wax and Dumont (1964) performed a landmark, qualitative study of the Oglala Sioux in Pineridge, South Dakota. This project focused on the delivery of Indian education at a BIA controlled school. Their findings suggested that the qualitative approach was beneficial when little was known about a particular culture's "meaning systems", and concluded that their exploratory project "opened" the door for further research on the subject.

McCarty (1989) researched the "Rough Rock Demonstration" school on the Navajo Reservation to determine the impact of tribal ownership and leadership in community schools. This study utilized an ethnographic approach to data gathering. The "Rough Rock" project was the first Native American school to formulate its own governmental structure and curriculum, without the guidance of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Navajo language was spoken and Navajo cultural values were practiced throughout the curriculum.

Although the "Rough Rock" school was first developed as a pilot project, and was the first tribally operated school,

McCarty (1989) did find that student achievement transcended the classroom. Thus, it was apparent that educational problems could not be fully addressed within the school setting. Rather, that the tribal socioeconomic and cultural systems continued to play a large part in the degree of student achievement and educational success.

Latham (1989) and Reyhner and colleagues (1988, 1989, 1990 and 1992) have also conducted extensive research into American Indian education. For example, Latham (1989) conducted a series of interviews and classroom observations on Native American elementary and secondary students. His findings suggested that an assimilationist approach would improve BIA controlled schools. However, Reyhner and colleagues (1988, 1989, 1990 and 1992) have consistently advocated for culturally relevant educational programs for Native students.

Even more recently, McInerney and Swisher (1995) conducted a research project on Navajo students and their motivations for learning. Their findings have indicated that "...schools, through their policies, programs and administration, must be places where Navajo and other minority group children can experience academic success" (p.45). Furthermore, they advocated that future educational research must "tease out" those cultural factors that appear

to influence student performance in tribal as well as mainstream schools.

Finally, Deyhle (1995) culminated a 10 year ethnographic study of the lives, both in school and out, of Navajo youth in a border reservation community. Not only were the students' behaviors, achievements, and problems documented, but also family and community issues were addressed. An acceptance of the tribal traditions and norms significantly affected post-secondary student achievement and success. Students, who were subjected to cultural marginality, experienced difficulties in securing their post-secondary and occupational futures.

Clearly, one issue remains very substantial in terms of the American Indian adult student, more research and testing needs to be performed. Awareness of this issue is high among researchers, however, the vastness of the problem and the heterogeneity of the population inhibits the likelihood of any major comprehensive study. Therefore, this research plan will continue to explore the problem of Native American adult non-participation in organized educational programs by applying the critical perspective to this qualitative endeavor.

As stated before, the critical perspective suggested that students negotiate organized learning and make

successful transitions to institutional life by undergoing some degree of "perspective transformation" (Mezirow, 1978 and 1981). Perspective transformation necessitates a critical appraisal of the assumptions underlying their roles, priorities and beliefs, while also requiring that the individual "know" him or herself well. Thus, survival and success educationally may likely depend on the Native student's ability to take personal responsibility for their own learning. This problem, clearly, "goes against" traditional Native values and norms which places the community or group above the individual's needs or desires. Additionally, external forces are perceived as having a more significant impact on the outcome of their life than their actions as an individual (Beaty and Beaty Chiste, 1986).

Determining those institutional programs and delivery methods that appear to positively affect Navajo adult student retention and educational success is the primary focus of this research. Additionally, the question of whether tribal values and normative systems facilitate or impede adult student success will also be analyzed.

Thus, the next chapter of this research will thoroughly review the qualitative approach to data gathering. Furthermore, a discussion of the specific research questions under study will be reviewed and the various methods by

which the data were gathered will be analyzed. Finally, the foundation of this study, the critical perspective, will offer the rational for the methodological selection.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

> "Onen tsi ne'i nakkara". "This is my story. Do you wish to hear it told?" And he begins the oldest of tales (Bruchac, 1991).

The Qualitative Approach

This research study utilized the qualitative approach in the gathering of the data. This approach was chosen because it allowed the researcher to experience the reality of the subjects as they perceived it. As Filstead stated (1970):

> ...qualitative methodology advocates an approach to examining the empirical social world which requires the researcher to interpret the real world from the perspective of the subjects of his or her investigation...(p.7).

Current research in the area of adult participation in formalized education is often couched in the conceptual view of the quantitative approach to data gathering. Superimposed definitions and value-laden constructs are used to explain motivations and deterrents to participation among adult students. More importantly, the quantitative approach has dominated the literature regarding minority participation in

adult education (Charner, 1980). Thus, the "subject's reality" is often left out of these explanations.

As Rockhill suggested (1982) the qualitative perspective represents a different way of knowing, of thinking, and of interpreting the experience of the participants. As such, it opens up an entirely new way of searching into the often unasked questions. The answers to these questions may lead to a deeper understanding of participation among under-represented groups. The qualitative approach can provide much more meaningful insight into the phenomenon of adult participation in educational activities.

The qualitative approach does not typically begin with a specific theory, rather the problem under study becomes the focus. For instance, the primary goal of the researcher is to "get into the mind" of the subjects under study. The emphasis is on volunteered rather than solicited information. Situations provide the focus, and the individual is studied within his or her life situation. Rather than "causation", the intent of the study is on meaning. The research design is holistic in its approach, and the various steps involved in the research process are interactive (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

One of the key problems of any qualitative endeavor is

maintaining validity. While the focus should remain exploratory and explanatory, validity becomes an issue because the researcher is the primary data gathering instrument. The next section of this chapter will discuss the issues surrounding validity and the use of triangulation in this study.

Validity and Triangulation

In any qualitative research endeavor, the researcher becomes the tool. The investigator is an integral part of the research process. Sense impressions, intuition and creativity are all ways of gaining personal knowledge, and are considered valid approaches to data gathering. According to Rockhill (1982) and Atkinson and Hammersley (1994), the subjectivity of experience is taken as a given and is not seen as inconsistent with validity, but rather to be its source. Thus, validity should be viewed as the goal and the central problem for qualitative researchers. The researcher must capture the intent and reality of the subjects under study, but also match those conclusions with the subject's intentions.

There are a variety of data gathering methods found within the qualitative approach. For instance, in-depth interviews, on-site observations, historical analysis,

content analysis, the biographical method and case studies are all examples of how information can be gathered within the realm of qualitative research. Denzin (1978) suggested that researchers should rely on several different data gathering methods to insure data triangulation.

Furthermore, Denzin (1989) has suggested that all of these methods share the same basic assumptions found within the perspective of qualitative methods. By employing any combination of these data gathering techniques, triangulation can be performed. Additionally, he suggested that triangulation was important in any research endeavor, but particularly so in qualitative research because of the inherent weaknesses found in utilizing the researcher as the primary data gathering tool. Researchers who employ triangulation are committed to "sophisticated rigor" (Denzin, 1989, p. 234). Furthermore, as Janesick (1994) suggested, "triangulation is meant to be a heuristic tool for the researcher" (p.209).

Summarizing the Qualitative Approach

The implications for the study of participation in adult education through the use of the qualitative approach are many. This perspective should help to overcome some of the difficulties that now confront research into the

phenomenon of participation in adult education by focusing on the subjective experiences and interpretations of participants and non-participants alike. With this goal in mind, the investigator can get to the meaning behind and beyond correlations among variables. By uncovering the people's definitions of their situations and common-sense rules that govern their everyday learning and participation, research will overcome the problems of value-imposition and construct validity.

W.I. Thomas suggested (1967) in his work on "The Definition of the Situation":

> ...preliminary to any self-determined act of behavior there is always a stage of examination and deliberation which we may call *the definition of the situation*. And actually not only concrete acts are dependent on the definition of the situation, but gradually a whole life-policy and the personality of the individual himself [sic] follow from a series of such definitions...(p. 331).

Also, Thomas stated that there is always a rivalry between the differences of individual definitions-which tend toward "hedonistic" selections of activity-and society's definitions-which wishes "its members to be laborious, dependable...orderly and self-sacrificing" (p. 334).

These differences may be entirely appropriate to developing a much greater understanding about minority group participation in adult education activities. In other words, by understanding individual perceptions of activity as they compare with societal or cultural perceptions of activity, the goal of ascertaining deterrents and motivations among minority group members who participate in adult education may become clearer.

The next few sections of this chapter will focus on how this study was performed. Specifically, the questions of how site selection was ascertained, entree' was gained, the sampling technique was performed, and the issues surrounding the various data gathering approaches all will be discussed.

Situating the Study

Recall that the primary problem of this research was to examine the cultural and institutional structure factors within a post-secondary educational setting as they related to Navajo adult students. Thus, this research endeavor focused on two communities on and near the Navajo reservation. One of the communities, Two Mountains, is located on the "Big Navajo Reservation". The other community, River City, is located on the reservation border and is often referred to as a "border town" (Kunitz and

Levy, 1991). Located in each of these communities is a two-year, post-secondary, educational institution.

These two institutions enroll a large number of Navajo adult students each semester and are geographically close in proximity. Therefore, this project chose to compare the two institutions' programs and procedures in addition to comparing their Navajo adult student populations. These comparisons focused primarily on those cultural norms and values and institutional structures that either facilitated or deterred the attendance of the Navajo adult student population.

As was indicated earlier in this project, minority group members do not exhibit participation rates comparable to their overall numbers in the total United States population. Moreover, the Native American adult student population is very low compared with other minority group members. For this study, the Navajo population was selected because it is the largest Native American tribe, and because the lives of the Navajo people on or near the reservation offer a greater possibility of homogeneity regarding cultural and social conditions. Finally, one of the most important reasons for selecting this particular region results from the issues of sampling and entree'. In the following sub-sections of this study, the actual on-site

observational process will be reviewed and a discussion of entree' and sampling will be performed.

The On-Site Observation Process

The observation phase of this research actually occurred over a two year period. In other words, the observations of the Navajo people did not begin and end at predetermined points, rather, these observations were recorded each time visits were made to the region. Thus, these observations provided the background upon which the institutional and cultural characteristics could be more fully analyzed and evaluated.

In order to grasp the significance of the observational phase of this study, it is important to recall the objectives of observation in the overall scheme of fieldwork in social research. Emerson (1988) has suggested that "in studying the social world, the researcher's core problem is to understand the meanings that actions and events have for those being studied" (p. 14). This understanding, therefore, becomes a second-order interpretation of what has already been pre-interpreted by members of the social group being researched.

In order to best understand the meanings of a particular social group, the researcher must develop an

appreciation for the cultural norms and values of the research group. As Murray Wax stated (1967) *verstehen*, or interpretive understanding, requires grasping the vast background of shared meanings that occur within any social group. *Verstehen* is the "foundation" for qualitative research and is a different process from those positivist procedures of the natural sciences.

The observational data for this research was gathered during five different visits to the Four Corners region. Each trip lasted from two to three weeks in duration. The observations from each trip were recorded in field notes and interpreted and clarified at the end of each day's work.

The initial visit during the on-site observational phase provided the opportunity to explore various points of interest in the Four Corners region. Additionally, significant events and issues were studied in order to fully grasp the history of the Navajo people. The field notes recorded during each day's observations allowed for the development of a geographical and social context upon which the study was based. Navajo norms and values were also observed and recorded in the field notes. These observations assisted in the acquisition of a more complete understanding of the relationship between the land and the Native population under study.

The length of time actually spent in each of the communities totaled nearly three and one half months. During each of the community and institutional visits, which occurred throughout the study, observations of individual and group behaviors were noted in addition to the perceived socioeconomic conditions of the people. Moreover, each community's architectural and planning themes, available goods and services, and growth patterns were described and recorded in a journal.

In summary, a variety of observations, ranging from the climatic and geographic conditions of the area to the mapping of residential and business sectors of each of the communities under study, were recorded during each visit to the region. The next sub-section of this research specifically describes how entree' was gained and how the interview sample was generated.

Gaining Entree'

As Morse (1994) has indicated, it would be foolish for any researcher to select a study site in which access would be denied. The researcher should ascertain prior to final site selection whether cooperation and access will be granted.

For this study, entree' was established with the Dean

of Student Affairs at each of the institutions several months in advance of the first institutional visit. To begin, preliminary telephone calls were made to each institution and appointments were set to visit with the appropriate Deans.

During the initial visits, each Dean was appraised of the nature of the research and permission was requested to conduct the research project. After explaining the purpose of the research project, each of the Deans were especially helpful in granting open access to instructors and special services personnel. Additionally, the Deans granted permission to engage students and staff in conversations as they were deemed appropriate. This measure of confidence assisted in the interviewing and observation stages of the study by providing the opportunity to start the "snow-ball" sampling process (Babbie, 1995; Patton, 1990) with the student population.

Personal contacts with an extended family of Navajos had been established through a mutual friend six months before the first regional visit. Three of these individuals had participated in post-secondary education as adults and were very understanding of the issues under exploration. Moreover, each of these three considered themselves and were considered by others as Navajo. Their knowledge of the

area, various Navajo families, and their daily practice of the Navajo culture proved to be invaluable assets to the study. Additionally, these three individuals became the "qualified informants" (Maril, 1989) for the study. "Qualified informants" are described as individuals who practice the social and cultural norms of the group under study. Thus they serve as interpreters for the researcher and offer the critical viewpoint necessary to decrease or eliminate potential misunderstandings in the acquisition of data.

Maintaining Confidentiality and Anonymity

After permission was granted to pursue the research, each of the Deans, as well as the "qualified informants", were assured that their responses would remain completely confidential throughout the study. Additionally, all names of the interviewees and when applicable, their position titles, were changed to protect their privacy. The names of the two institutions and the communities under study were also changed in order to prevent disclosure of confidential information and to maintain the anonymity of the respondents. All available efforts were made to protect all participants from disclosure to the general public, their colleagues, or other researchers.

The Sampling Technique

The sampling technique which was utilized in the interview phase of the study was convenience sampling (Babbie, 1995). Traditional methods and standards of the sampling process expect that the researcher will seek random samples. However, this criterion assumes equality in accessibility to populations. With non-traditional populations, such as minority, adult students, obtaining a random sample is not a straight forward task. Moreover, this study's sample was based on the need to interview three categories of individuals: students, non-students, and professional educators. Thus, the purposeful character of this study's sample was established prior to the actual selection process and built into it (Pesquera, 1993).

The "qualified informants" (of this study) had previously explained that many of the students would not have telephones in their homes and could not be contacted for interview scheduling. Therefore, the need arose to generate a sample based on the "snow-ball" effect (Babbie, 1995; Patton, 1990).

Essentially, the study's sample emerged upon introduction to two students at each institution by the Deans. These students agreed to participate in the research and, in turn, each of these students acquainted the

researcher with other students and friends who agreed to participate in the interview process as well. On three different occasions students were approached in the institutional libraries in order to insure gender and age diversity among the student participants. During each of these occasions, at least one student did not agree to participate because they were too busy studying. The total interview sample of the student population reflected the gender and age diversity of each institution. Twenty students were interviewed for the study.

In terms of the professional educator category, each of the Deans directed me to the coordinators of the adult education programs for their respective institutions. These two individuals were very helpful in accessing other faculty and staff members, all of whom agreed to participate. The faculty and staff participants represented a diversity of disciplines and institutional positions and a total of eight were interviewed.

The non-student participants were also accessed through the "snow-ball" effect. The study's qualified informants were extremely helpful in introducing potential participants. A total of nine non-students were eventually interviewed for the study and represented a variety of ages, genders, and occupations.

The following sections of this chapter will describe the actual methods which were used to acquire data. In total, four different methods were selected. These various methodologies provided the foundation for methodological triangulation which will be discussed in detail in the next section (Denzin, 1978).

Data Collection Methods

According to Field and Morse (1991) the research strategy is determined by the nature of the research questions. Research strategies are merely tools; and it becomes the researcher's responsibility to appreciate the ramifications of selecting one method over another. The link between the research questions and the methods selected will ultimately determine the usefulness of the data acquired.

This study utilized four different data gathering methods based on their potential for producing "useable" results. These methods were selected during the design phase of the study and include the following: historical analysis, content analysis, participant observation, and in-depth interviewing. By utilizing several approaches in the collection of the data, methodological triangulation (Denzin, 1978) was performed. This increased the potential

for validity within the project, and decreased the likelihood that researcher bias or misinterpretations had occurred. The following subsections of this chapter will discuss the potential of each selected method, and how the data for each method was gathered for this study.

Historical Analysis

Historical analysis is viewed as one of the primary approaches to data gathering when a "descriptive sense" of the population is needed (Morse, 1994). This approach is useful in answering questions about "values, beliefs and practices of a cultural group" (Grant and Fine, 1992). Thus, the collection of historical data about the two communities and institutions in addition to the Navajo tribe was deemed vital in the development of a greater understanding regarding the present-day residents.

Inquiry into the social and cultural lives of a people cannot be performed without an awareness of the history of those people (Light and Keller, 1985). Moreover, social behavior does not occur in a historical vacuum. Thus, the values, beliefs, norms and customs of the people or "Dine`", as the Navajo refer to themselves, served as a primary force behind this study.

Further, this analysis provided for a greater

understanding of the various factors that appeared to significantly influence Navajo attitudes toward life, and their interactions with others. Additionally, the historical analysis assisted in determining cultural values and normative expectations of the Navajo people, as well as, the structural characteristics of each institution as they appeared to either impede or enhance participation.

This method partially addressed the research question pertaining to cultural factors that may inhibit or enhance participation. Also, it provided some of the information necessary to compare the impact of the structural factors of the two institutions on Navajo adult participation.

Regional historical sites, community museum collections, tribal government information and institutional histories were all utilized to collect the historical information. The study's "qualified informants" were asked for assistance when clarification was needed regarding cultural issues, language interpretation, or field logistics problems.

Content Analysis

Content analysis involves the direct examination of various items of communication (Manheim and Rich, 1981). In general, these items fall into one of three categories:

those that are internally generated and internally directed; those that are internally generated and externally directed; and those that are externally generated and internally directed. Regardless of the category, the most appropriate technique for understanding these various communications is through the use of content analysis.

Content analysis is an appropriate method to use whenever a research question necessitates an analysis of existing physical records or publications. This study selected content analysis as the method of choice for reviewing the two institution's general catalogues and statistical reports. The unit of analysis was the item. As Manheim and Rich (1981) have suggested, an item of communication should be examined for its overall character and then evaluated based on predetermined criteria. Criteria are typically formulated from the original research questions and existing literature in the discipline.

As with historical analysis, content analysis attempts to describe the phenomenon under study (Morse, 1992). In this study, content analysis was conducted on specific characteristics of the two institutions. These characteristics were analyzed from the catalogues and institutional reports acquired from the two sites. Both

institutions generate internal, evaluation reports for administrative review.

For example, this study focused on such institutional characteristics as: the Native adult student count (FTE's), special services availability, programs, delivery methods, as well as other characteristics, that appeared to either impede or facilitate Navajo adult student learning. This analysis addressed the research question regarding structural factors within the institutional setting. Additionally, the question regarding the measurement of Navajo adult students was addressed via this method.

Development of the Institutional Assessment Tool

An institutional assessment tool was formulated by the researcher after first analyzing the contents of the two institutional evaluation reports. The assessment tool was inductively derived from these institutional reports. Additionally, those characteristics, which were deemed relevant by the researcher, were selected after reviewing pertinent research findings in the field of adult education (Merriam and Caffarella, 1991). A complete copy of the institutional assessment tool is located in Appendix A.

This assessment tool was then used to track the characteristics under study at each institution. The

assessment tool provided a numerical means of comparing the two institutions. As Manheim and Rich have indicated (1981), content analysis must be coded onto a coding sheet in which each item is summarized and counted. The institutional assessment tool served as the coding sheet for this study.

Finally, but most importantly, the data gathered from the content analysis phase of the study provided the context to determine not only the actual rates of participation, but also, the determination of each institution to satisfy the perceived needs of Navajo adult students.

On-Site Observations

Another method that was employed in the study was on-site observation. As Vidich pointed out (1970) "...the on-site observation process enables the researcher to secure his or her data within the mediums, symbols and experiential world of the subjects under study..."(165). Copious field notes were taken throughout the study. Like Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) have suggested, the researcher in this project acted merely as "an on-site observer". Observations of the community settings and of the institutions were documented in a set of "field text" notes (Clandinin and Connelly, 1994).

Primarily, the student centers and the classroom buildings of the two institutions served as the locations for the institutional observations, while excursions around the region provided the background for the community observations. These observations assisted in validating the perceived cultural and institutional structural factors that appeared to either inhibit or enhance Navajo participation in adult education.

A thick description of the data (Denzin, 1994) was then developed which facilitated a cohesive understanding of the meanings of the Navajo culture. The thick description developed the context surrounding each experience, and assisted in "sorting out" the data. Furthermore, this description enhanced the study's plan to develop a better understanding of the mediums and symbols of the Navajo adult student (Geertz, 1973). The documentation of the on-site experiences also provided an invaluable context with which to validate the interview material.

In order to better understand the socioeconomic, behavioral, and cultural attributes of the people under study, it became necessary to observe not only the two institutions, but also various areas within each of the communities (Thorne, 1978). For example, trips to the grocery store, the newspaper office, cafes, and shopping

centers all provided essential experiential documentation regarding stratification issues, socioeconomic conditions, and normative behaviors of the people and region.

In-Depth Interviews

The last and most detailed data gathering method involved the in-depth interviews. The actual number of interviews that were performed were collected from eight professional educators who work with Navajo students either as faculty members, counselors, or Native Program Directors. Also, twenty Navajo students were interviewed, as well as, nine non-students, some of whom, had already completed degree programs. For purposes of clarity, all of the non-student participants were no longer involved in education, or had never participated in some type of adult education.

All of these interviews allowed for a saturation of the three sampling categories to be performed (Adler and Adler, 1994). Additionally, by interviewing all of these groups, triangulation was performed which assisted in checking potential researcher misunderstanding. Furthermore, comparisons could then be made between perceptions of the student and professional educator populations and the non-student populations on the issues under study such as Navajo cultural factors, and the institutional structure factors as

they relate to participation in education.

Development of the Interview Schedule The interview schedule was formulated through an analysis of the Cox and Ramirez Model (1981) of cultural values and learning styles. Specifically, the Cox and Ramirez model described the relationship between cultural values and learning styles of students. Moreover, this model suggested that cultural values influence socialization practices which in turn influence the ways students learn.

Swisher (1994) utilized the Cox and Ramirez model in her survey of American Indian learning styles. Concomitantly, she also used a list of twenty seven cultural values "adhered to by most Indian groups" (p. 2). These values had been determined by the California Department of Education (1982) and were presented as attitudes, behaviors, and educational considerations.

Additionally, the interview questions were also derived from the Maehr Inventory of School Motivation (1986) which was designed to investigate the nature of motivation in cross-cultural settings. McInerney and Swisher (1995) had used the Maehr model to ascertain which cultural factors appeared to most significantly affect Native students. The Maehr Personal Investment Model (1986) was designed to

incorporate both the emic and the etic qualities of motivation. The Maehr model conceptualizes motivated behavior as being determined by three variables: incentives, sense of self, and facilitating conditions. In addition to the Cox and Ramirez model and the values determined by the California Department of Education, these concepts assisted in guiding the development of the interview questions which focused on cultural factors.

The interview questions which centered on institutional structure factors were derived from Van Hamme's (1996) analysis of Indian culture in the classroom, and from Badwound and Tierney's (1988) review of American Indian leadership among tribal colleges. For a complete copy of the interview schedule see Appendix B.

Pilot Testing of the Interview Schedule The interview schedule was pilot tested (Janesick, 1994) at a small, rural, junior college in Oklahoma. The student population of the pilot institution was predominantly Anglo, although there were approximately ten percent of the student population which had indicated Native American ethnicity enrolled at the institution.

Each interview lasted anywhere from one hour to four hours, depending on the time availability of the respondents. Interestingly, as each of the respondents

realized that this researcher was not "connected with a government organization" and was a student just like themselves, they "opened up" and discussed their problems and concerns quite readily. The pilot test process assisted in understanding what would be involved in developing rapport with each of the study's interview participants.

The pilot test process also assisted in determining the "workability" of the various questions. It was found that by explaining the interview's purpose in detail to each of the respondents, they would begin talking about their lives and how they came to be involved in further education. The most difficult aspect of the pilot test was staying on task. Additionally, after asking each question, notes were taken to assist in question revision (Janesick, 1994).

The Actual Interview Process After pilot testing the interview questions, it became clear that in most instances, the respondents would direct the course of the interview. This phenomenon occurred at the actual study sites as well. As the respondents became comfortable with the tone and direction of the interview, they "loosened up" and offered more personal information. In order to retain their confidence, the participants were encouraged to "just talk". Thus, many of the interviews became "informative conversations". Furthermore, none of the respondents

appeared to mind having their answers audio-recorded in addition to note-taking.

The typical interview took from thirty minutes to one hour to complete. On two occasions on the Reservation, the interviews lasted much longer than the tape time. In these cases, the hand-written notes became the only record of the last segments of those interviews. Upon completing the interviews, the data was then transcribed and categorized, usually within a few hours of the actual interview.

Applying Analytic Induction to the Interview Material

As a guide to interpreting the interview material, analytic induction, as a research tool, was employed throughout the study. Specifically, analytic induction refers to the search for propositions that apply to all cases of the problem under analysis (Denzin, 1989). The use of analytic induction represents something of a departure from the experimental or survey modes of research.

Analytic induction permits the researcher to work back and forth between theory and observations, altering when necessary both the theory and the definitions of central concepts. Finally, analytic induction forces a close articulation between "fact, observation, concept, proposition, and theory" (Lindesmith, 1947 p.37). Analytic

induction was performed throughout this study, particularly in terms of the interview component. As data was accumulated during the interview phase, findings emerged that appeared to challenge the existing theories of adult participation in education. The next section of this chapter focuses on the application of the theoretical base that was chosen for this study. The critical perspective was utilized in understanding the data and in making sense of the setting from which the data was gathered.

Applying the Critical Perspective to Qualitative Methods

The application or discussion of critical theory elicits polarized arguments from most circles. Moreover, qualitative research that utilizes the critical perspective as its base or foundation can produce "uncomfortable" knowledge. This knowledge may shake the very institutions or structures under study (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994).

The early critical theorists of Marcuse, Adorno and Horkheimer were rooted philosophically in the Marxist school of thought. However, they were more concerned with the continued subjugation and injustices facing minority groups, particularly in the United States, than the "class/property issues" stressed by Marx and Engles. Later, scholars who came of age during the Vietnam War Era believed that

critical theory held the key to unlocking the changing face of post-modern capitalism. These young academicians were impressed by critical theory's dialectical concern with the social construction of experience, and came to view postmodern discourse as the "discourse of possibility" (Giroux, 1988; Wexler, 1991; Gibson, 1986).

Specifically, Giroux (1988) and other critical educators were more concerned with the application of critical theory to the institution of education. These scholars perceived schools as ..."venues of hope, which could become sites of resistance and democratic possibility through the concerted efforts of faculty and students who worked cooperatively within a liberatory framework..." (p. 194).

Thus, this research endeavor was formulated on the idea that the critical perspective could provide the underlying foundation for understanding power and opportunity differentials between groups. Specifically, the differentials that appeared to exist between the Anglo and the Navajo communities in this study.

Kincheloe, (1991) for example, argued that the way empirical data is analyzed and interpreted is conditioned by the way it is empirically framed. Critical researchers do not search for some magic method of inquiry that will

guarantee the validity of their findings. As Giroux (1983) maintained, "methodological correctness" will never guarantee valid data, nor does it reveal power interests within a body of information (p. 17). Critical inquiry does not reduce human beings to "social outcomes" (Habermas, 1970). Critical researchers attempt to integrate the researcher with the researched. As Kincheloe pointed out (1991) critical researchers reject the traditional notion of external validity. More precisely, critical researchers do not believe that pristine generalizations that assume a one-dimensional, cause and effect universe exists.

As Slaughter stated (1989), "a critical postmodern research requires researchers to construct their perception of the world anew, not just in random ways but in a manner that undermines what appears natural, that opens to question what appears obvious" (p. 260). To engage in critical research requires the development of an "other world" view. A view that is guided by a choice to make the world less conditioned to suffering, oppression and power differences. Critical research, although, seemingly pessimistic, is truly an optimistic approach in an age of cynicism.

Summarizing the Methodology

In summary, the various methods by which the data was

gathered in this critical research project, provided for a clearer understanding of the depth of difference between the Anglo "bordertown" institution and the Navajo "rez" institution. Moreover, the levels of participation and retention among the two populations were analyzed based on cultural and structural differences between the two institutions. Thus, the critical perspective illuminated the data analysis process.

It has long been held that the qualitative approach is entirely appropriate when exploring a phenomenon about which little is known (Ziegahn, 1992). This project certainly fits into the "little known arena" because so few research efforts have fully examined the cultural and institutional structure differences between Anglo and American Indian institutions of adult education.

As each of the data gathering phases were completed, data analysis provided a further understanding of the problem under study. Specifically, the focus of the interview and on-site observation phases was on the cultural and institutional structure factors of the two institutions. The descriptive statistics, gathered during the historical and content analysis phases, then provided the background upon which the primary data could be analyzed and the conclusions drawn. The next chapter of this research will

review the objectives of the study and will address them through a presentation of the findings.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

> "Now you are beginning again. Take care of your sheep, as you would care for your children. Never kill them for food...These few sheep, must grow into flocks. So that we, The People, can be as we once were" quoting Barboncito a mid 19th century, Navajo Medicine Man (Thompson, 1982).

The Problem and Purpose Revisited

The problem of this research involved the issue of low participation rates in post-secondary education among minority adults. Specifically, this study has focused on the Navajo adult student population in two community college settings. Furthermore, the purpose of this research was to determine those key factors that appeared to contribute to the attraction and retention in adult and continuing education programs among Navajo adult students. Additionally, this study planned to determine those factors that appeared to inhibit participation among Navajo adult students.

The following sections of this chapter will present the data findings and analysis of each of the methodological categories beginning with a presentation of the area's history as it affects cultural differences between reservation and non-reservation populations. Secondly, the

data gathered from the content analysis phase of this research will be reviewed and presented. Next, the participant observation stage of the research, which consequently, was performed throughout the study, will be analyzed. Finally, the interview portion of the study will be discussed as the questions are categorized and collapsed.

A Review of the Research Objectives

Before the findings of this research will be analyzed, the actual research objectives need to be reviewed. This project focused the data collection methods on the following objectives:

1. How is educational participation among Navajo adults at the two institutions under study actually measured?
2. What appeared to be the institutional structural factors that inhibited or enhanced participation among Navajo adults?
3. What were the cultural factors that appeared to inhibit or enhance participation among Navajo adults?
4. What types of programs or activities appeared to attract or retain Navajo adult students?

The findings of this study have been categorized according to the data collection methods that were used. Recall that each data collection method was chosen to assist

in developing conclusions about the four research objectives. Also, remember that the critical perspective has provided the foundation upon which the data was analyzed. The following sections will discuss the findings of each of the methods used.

A Presentation of the Methodological Findings

The Dine': A Historical Overview

The Four Corners country of the American Southwest is a fascinating place to one interested in people and their environment. There is a mingling and merging of three distinct cultures: the Native American, the Spanish and the Anglo. The first known inhabitants of the area appear to be ancestors of the Navajo people. The Spanish did not make an official entrance into the area until 1765, and Anglo mountain men and settlers did not venture into the region until the early 1800's (MacDonald and Arrington, 1970).

The first major influx of United States citizens into the area began in the 1820's. Trappers and homesteaders saw the region as having extensive natural resources. Water, open country, gold, pelts, and later, oil and gas, were all resources that drew people to the area. River City was founded in 1875 by gold miners from Colorado. The miners were looking for a permanent home for their families, and

found the River City area teeming with abundant water, wildlife, and good farm ground. Within a few short years, the community of River City provided all of the services one would find in any eastern American city (MacDonald and Arrington, 1970).

Community and Institutional Contrasts River City lies on the border of the Navajo Reservation. The reservation borders were defined by the Treaty of 1868, in which the Navajo were allowed to return to their homes from Fort Sumner where they had been confined since 1864 (Sundberg, 1995). Because of its "border community" status, River City serves as the commerce hub for a very diverse population. Navajo, Hispanic, and Anglo families live and work in the community and surrounding area as they have for decades.

River City is a "main-street" town that lacks any cohesive historic or cultural style. Store fronts and neighborhood subdivisions display an architectural hodgepodge. However, the key factor that describes the region today is the sense of rurality. Although the community has a population of approximately 32,000 (United States Department of Commerce, 1996), agriculture is dominant in the area. Specifically, the area is noted for growing vast amounts of fruits and vegetables.

Approximately 55 percent of the total land in the

region is used for agricultural purposes (United States Department of Commerce, 1996). Another important industry for the area is oil and gas exploration and development. The oil and gas industry's growth during the late 1970's on through the 1980's has accounted for a substantial influx of "outsiders" to the area.

Because of its location next to the Navajo Reservation, River City serves as a center of trade for many Navajo people. The businesses in the region are predominantly Anglo owned and operated. The Anglos have traded with the Native population since the early 1800's both in River City and at Anglo operated trading posts on the reservation. Although the Anglo business owners have had a relatively good relationship with the Navajo population, conflict has occurred periodically through the years.

Conflict between the Anglo and Navajo populations has been and continues to be caused most frequently by ethnocentric attitudes among the Anglo population. Ethnocentrism is defined as "the tendency to judge other cultures in terms of one's own customs, values and beliefs" (Tischler, 1996).

Ethnocentric attitudes among the Anglo population have exacerbated racial and ethnic tensions in the Four Corners region. For example, in 1974, three Navajo males were found

dead in a canyon north of River City. The fear and chaos that erupted over these murders left River City in complete upheaval. Three Anglo youths were later found guilty of committing the heinous acts. As a result of the racist incident, River City was labeled the "Selma" of the American Indian Movement (Barker, 1992).

After months of testimony and questioning, the state advisory committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission finally issued a 171 page report over the incident in 1975. According to the report (River City Daily Times, August 13, 1975) the commission attacked River City and stated "that it was a racist and sick community and had shown itself to be a blight on the state and a parasite of the Reservation" (p. 1). All of the commission members agreed that the Navajo people had and continued to experience discrimination within both the public and private sectors of the community.

The report continued by stating that River City's elected officials and Anglo citizenry needed to adjust their relationship with the Navajo population and work to reduce the complications of poverty, economic deprivation, exploitation, substance abuse, and inadequate health care suffered by the Navajo people. Moreover, the ethnocentrism and discrimination that had caused differential access and

accommodations to exist in the community and region had to cease (River City Daily Times, August 13, 1975).

According to commission chairperson, Sterling Black, (River City Daily Times, August 12, 1975) "an unequal economic situation exists in San Justo county and in River City in particular. The Navajo people depend on Anglo goods and services located in River City, but the Navajo people are not employed in proportionate numbers by the Anglo community" (p. 1).

Members of the Navajo tribe formed the Coalition for Navajo Liberation as a result of the racist murders. Members of the American Indian Movement joined the Coalition in backing the Civil Rights Commission report, although both groups were not optimistic that the attitudes and behaviors toward the Navajo people would ever "really change" (Barker, 1992).

Despite the fact that Indian resources are essential to the economy of the region, Anglo attitudes toward the Navajo continue to be rooted in racial arrogance (Deyhle, 1995; Barker, 1992). For example, there is a definite class structure evident in the River City community with the Native population occupying the lowest strata. This class separation has existed since Anglo settlers moved into the area, but became more prevalent after the early homesteaders

no longer depended on the Navajo to "survive". Further separation between the Anglos and the Navajos occurred after oil and gas were discovered early in the 1920's (MacDonald and Arrington, 1970).

The stratification issue is evident in the two institutions under study as well. Socioeconomic contrasts are seen in the campus buildings, budgets, and technological capabilities. For example, the community college in River City has the full support of the state government and the River City community. The institution's facilities are new and exhibit Southwest architecture. The grounds are beautifully landscaped and paved parking is virtually unlimited. It was founded in 1956 as the River City branch of the state's College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts. During the last thirty years, the campus has undergone substantial building projects with funding from local community bond issues and the state government (River City Institutional Report, 1994-1995).

Today, the campus consists of ten buildings, and three off-campus facilities, which together represent a value of more than sixty million dollars. The River City community college houses a library with more than 48,000 volumes, 400 periodical subscriptions, networked CD-ROM databases and on-line access to the Internet. There is also a 786 seat

Performance Hall and theater, and fourteen instructional computer labs for student use. The institution receives continual financial backing from a foundation that was developed in 1972 (River City Institutional Report, 1994-95).

When comparing the community of River City and the River City institution with the Navajo community of Two Mountains and the Two Mountains institution there are few similarities. The Two Mountains community is the largest of the Navajo "towns" with a total population of 27,846. This population is nearly 100 percent Navajo (Navajo Nation89 Profile, 1995). The community and surrounding reservation region supports a shopping mall which houses a major grocery store and a discount store. There are many "mom and pop" businesses within the community, and pawn shops and convenience stores line the state highways through town.

In terms of housing, most of the neighborhoods were developed by the Navajo Housing Authority and consist of cinder block duplexes and small, ranch style homes (Goodman, 1982). Moreover, few of the streets in Two Mountains are paved with the exception of the state highways which run through the community. There is however, a seventy-six bed tribally operated hospital and out-patient health center in the community, in addition to an out-patient, dialysis

center (Indian Health Service, 1993).

The Two Mountains community is bordered on the south by the San Justo River and is bordered to the west and north by mountain ranges. The community lies at the corner of the Navajo reservation. It serves as the center of the Two Mountains Chapter and is a locus of trade for the surrounding reservation population.

The Two Mountains campus is thirty miles from the River City community college, but the differences between the two communities and campuses reflect the cultural and socioeconomic differences between the Anglo and Navajo populations. Again, the stratification issue becomes clearly evident in that the Two Mountains facility is housed in an old Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding school which was built in the 1940's (Navajo Community College Report, 1994-1995). The Two Mountains campus does not exhibit regular maintenance and is in need of extensive interior and exterior restoration. Central heat and air is nonexistent. Only floor fans and swamp coolers are used for cooling, and the old boilers do not provide consistent heat during the winter months. The stone exteriors are cracking, and the wood trim is in need of painting. Parking for students, faculty, and visitors is sparse and unpaved.

The Two Mountains campus is one branch of the tribally

controlled, seven branch, Navajo Community College system. The system was formulated in 1968 and provides educational services to the Navajo adult population on the reservation. Funding for the community college system is derived from the tribal coffers, student tuition, and the BIA. In other words, the state government does not provide funding for the tribal schools (Navajo Community College Institutional Report 1994-1995). The Navajo Community College (NCC) system is assisted financially by a College Development Foundation which was started in 1982.

The Two Mountains campus serves Navajo adult students primarily, although there are Anglo and Hispanic students in attendance as well. The total value of the Navajo Community College system for 1994 was just over ten million dollars. This total covers the entire seven branch system (Navajo Community College Institutional Report, 1994-1995).

There are three computer labs for student use at Two Mountains. The administration has converted an existing classroom into the campus library which houses approximately 2,000 volumes. Although the library subscribes to a variety of periodicals, there are no scientific journals on the shelves. The Two Mountains bookstore is very small, but does provide a minimal amount of student supplies (Navajo Community College Institutional Report, 1994-1995).

Thus, the two communities of Two Mountains and River City are quite different. Two Mountains is a reservation town that offers the barest essentials for the Navajo people residing in the area. River City, on the other hand, is a thriving and prosperous (by Anglo terms) community that is home to a multitude of companies and industries. The two institutions reflect their respective positions within their community settings. Two Mountains appears to struggle to keep up with changing technology and socioeconomic conditions while River City appears to be pushing the future.

Recall that one of the research objectives in this study was concerned with cultural issues that may inhibit or attract Navajo adult students to post-secondary education. Based on the historical context of the region, the Navajo and Anglo populations have not enjoyed a viable, completely harmonious relationship through the years.

For example, the Anglo community continues to rely on the reservation population for economic survival, but the Navajo do not experience complete reciprocity in this regard. The Navajo population is dependent on Anglo owned and operated businesses for jobs and is especially vulnerable to economic declines within the Anglo community (Deyhle, 1995). It is apparent that the cultural and

socioeconomic differences between the two groups continue to create subtle dissension. To attend a post-secondary institution without leaving home, the Navajo adult student population must choose between the better financed, up-to-date, River City facility and the older, poorer financed, Two Mountains institution. Thus, the stratification issue continues to cause problems for Navajo adult students who prefer to maintain the traditional ties with their culture by attending the Navajo administered institution.

The cultural norms and values of the Navajo people have differentiated them from the dominant (Anglo) majority since initial contact occurred. These differences appear to consistently create feelings of inferiority among the Navajo people, and accentuate negativity between the two populations.

The remaining methodological sections of this chapter will further demonstrate the marked differences between the two communities' populations and their respective educational institutions. Additionally, the findings from each will be analyzed and discussed.

Institutional Factors: Comparing Two Mountains to River City

In this section of the study, the two institutions' structural factors were assessed and analyzed. These

factors were based on the institutional reports from each institution. Additionally, institutional staff were asked to clarify any areas that were confusing or unclear.

In order to perform the content analysis phase of the study, an assessment tool was formulated by the researcher which was inductively derived from an analysis of the two institutional evaluation reports (see Appendix A for a complete copy of the assessment tool). The actual assessment tool is broken down into three tables. This tool served as the "coding sheet" onto which the various categories were numerically summarized and compared. This data gathering phase of the study assisted in determining the research question pertaining to how Navajo adult participation was measured as well as the level that each institution attempted to attract and retain Navajo adult learners.

The content analysis broke the institutional evaluations into three distinct categories in order to facilitate ease of comparison regarding the two institutions. The three categories of information are listed as follows: student category; institutional structures category; and faculty category. As each of the categories are discussed, the assessment tool table which represents the actual data will follow.

Student Category The student populations of the two institutions are very dissimilar in many respects. River City educates approximately six times more students than Two Mountains, but it should be noted that the retention rates per student cohort at Two Mountains are double that of River City. Additionally, the number of students who receive financial aid at Two Mountains is nearly twice that of those who attend River City. Furthermore, the percentage of students at River City who claim Native ethnicity is only about one-fourth of the total student population at that institution. Whereas, at Two Mountains, the percentage of students who claim Native ethnicity is nearly 100 percent.

Both institutions experienced a high percentage of commuters, even though Two Mountains does have some dormitory housing available on campus. The average student age at both institutions is somewhat different. River City does attract more "second-chance" adults or adults who have not attempted education for some time after high school graduation. On the other hand, Two Mountains attracts more students who have graduated from high school within the past three or four years. All of these figures are located in the table listed below.

Assessment Tool Table: Student Category

Characteristic	River City	Two Mountains
Student FTE	2314	399
Student Retention Rate Percentage	41 percent	88 percent
Student Withdrawal Rate Percentage	59 percent	12 percent
Percent of Students Receiving Financial Aid	55 percent	98.5 percent
Percent of Students Who Commute	100 percent	91 percent
Average Student Age	32 years	24 years
Percentage of Students with Native Ethnicity	27 percent	98 percent

Sources: River City Institutional Report 1994-1995
Navajo Community College Report 1994-1995

Institutional Structures Category The two institutions are similar in many respects regarding the various institutional characteristics that are designed to provide services and education to students. The primary differences lie in the budget, administration, and philosophy categories.

For example, River City is appropriated an annual budget of over sixteen million dollars per year. These funds are derived from tuition, state appropriations and institutional bonded indebtedness and development funds.

Two Mountains, on the other hand, receives its funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Navajo Tribe, primarily, with student tuition dollars and development funds providing the remainder.

The administration of both sites demonstrate an extreme difference in credentials and ethnicity. The administration of the River City campus is comprised of Anglos with doctorates. River City is administered by a President and three Deans, all of whom administer from the River City campus.

Two Mountains is administered by one "in-house" Dean, who has an earned B.A. Two Mountains does have a President and two Vice-Presidents, but these positions are not located directly at the Two Mountains campus. The off-site administrators preside over the entire Navajo Community College System. The chief administrators of the Community College System are Native American and have earned doctorates.

The philosophy and mission statements of each institution represent the cultural differences between the two sites. Two Mountains' philosophy is based on the Dine' traditional living system, which places human life in harmony with the natural world and the universe. The

philosophy provides protection from the imperfections in life and for the development of well-being. The attributes of Sa' ah Naagha'i' Bik'eh Hozho'o'n (SNBH) are developed in the process of Nitsa'ha'kees (thinking), Naha'a' (planning), Iina' (living), and Sihasin (assurance) (Navajo Community College Institutional Report, 1994-1995).

One of the primary goals of the Navajo Community College system is to integrate and instill the holistic system of Navajo thinking and acting throughout and within the entire curriculum of the institution. This system focuses on the creation of individual harmony with the environment and the earth. Cooperative learning and work activities are the methods of choice for classroom instruction. The Navajo culture is taught to encourage the practice of traditional Navajo ways. For example, hogan building methods, the Navajo philosophy of living, and religious customs are passed on to students who enroll in the class. Additionally, the Navajo language is used in many of the course offerings at Two Mountains. Students are encouraged to utilize the Navajo way of life in their family and work relationships.

The River City philosophy, on the other hand, is not based on any Native approach to living. Rather, this

philosophy is more generic in its focus. For example, The River City campus attempts to provide educational programs for all students regardless of race, sex, age or socioeconomic group.

The River City mission is strongly community-based and strives to meet the needs of the community in the form of cultural and enrichment activities and problem-solving. For instance, the performance theater, which is located on campus, provides a place for musical and theatrical performances to be held for the enjoyment of the River City community. In addition, business and professional seminars are scheduled frequently to meet the continuing education needs of the River City business sector.

The River City philosophy states "that education is a life-long process and every individual has a capacity for learning" (River City Institutional Report, 1994-1995). Thus, this philosophy encompasses a much broader spectrum than the Two Mountains approach.

Moreover, these two institutions are vastly different in the number of degrees that are awarded each year. River City issues approximately 300 degrees per year, while Two Mountains issues approximately 34. River City also differs greatly in the number of extra-curricular activities that

are available to its students compared with Two Mountains. River City offers fifteen different extra-curricular programs to its student population, while Two Mountains only offers four.

In terms of technology, there is no comparison between the two campuses. River City has a most up-to-date technology program, which is housed in fourteen computer labs. Two Mountains, on the other hand, has three student labs. One of these is designated only for ABE or GED students which decreases the available computer space for the other post-secondary students.

In summary, the institutional characteristics are culturally and economically dissimilar in many respects. The funding levels, the ethnic backgrounds of the administration, and the philosophical missions clearly represent differences between the two institutions. While the River City institution meets the needs of a rapidly changing economy, the Two Mountains campus was designed to teach Navajo traditions and values. River City, for example, has implemented a "Toyota Tech Ed" program to provide labor for the import automotive industry. Two Mountains continues to offer Navajo arts and language classes, as well as general education courses.

Assessment Tool Table: Institutional Structures Category

Characteristic	River City	Two Mountains
Total Annual Budget	$16,515,886.00	$1,226,259.00
Total Degrees Awarded Annually	300	34
Native Bridge Programs	1	1
GED Program	1	1
ABE Program	1	1
Native Student Services Office	1	1
# of Extracurricular Programs Offered	15	4
National Accreditation	1	1
Native Philosophy	0	1
Remedial Learning Center	1	1
Student-Use Computer Labs	14	3
#Degrees Offered	3	3
Percentage of Administration with Native Ethnicity	0	100
Institutional Development Foundation	1	1

Sources: River City Institutional Report, 1994-1995
Navajo Community College Report, 1994-1995

Faculty Category The faculty category of the content analysis phase was significant in terms of the number of

faculty at each institution and the number of faculty members who were Navajo. At River City only five percent of the sixty four full-time faculty members claimed any Native ethnicity. At Two Mountains, seventy percent of the full-time faculty viewed themselves as Navajo.

Moreover, River City had a significant number of part-time faculty when compared with Two Mountains. River City's adjunct faculty was nearly three times the number of the full-time faculty, while the adjunct faculty at Two Mountains numbered less than half of the Two Mountains full-time faculty.

The River City campus did require a one day in-service of all new faculty over the subject of Native customs and learning styles. At the Two Mountains campus, in-service programs were offered throughout the academic year and any non-Navajo staff member could access the Navajo culture courses and language classes at any time. The administration at Two Mountains expected all faculty to respect the Navajo way of living. Non-Navajo faculty members did have a high turn-over rate because of the cultural differences between the students and themselves (Burroughs, 1997). The assessment tool table of the faculty category is listed on the following page.

Assessment Tool Table: Faculty Category

Characteristic	River City	Two Mountains
In-service Faculty Training on Native Culture	1 day required	required throughout academic year
# of full-time faculty	64	27
# of part-time faculty	179	11
Percentage of faculty claiming Native ethnicity	5 percent	70 percent

Sources: River City Institutional Report, 1994-1995
Navajo Community College Report, 1994-1995

Characteristics of the Region: A Study of People and Places

Recall that the on-site observation phase of this study was actually performed throughout the data gathering period. The observations of the communities, institutions, and the Navajo people did not begin and end at predetermined points, rather, these observations were recorded in a journal and in field notes during five different visits to the region over a two year period.

The on-site observations have been broken down into two categories for ease of understanding. The two categories are community observations and institutional observations. The findings of each category are discussed in the following

sub-sections beginning with the community observations.

Community Observations The community observations allowed for a deeper understanding of the people of the region to emerge. The two communities under study differed in socioeconomic status and in resource availability. River City is similar to most mid-western communities of its size. It has a regional airport with prop plane schedules to the larger cities in the Rocky Mountain region. The downtown area is home to several banks, the newspaper office, museum, city library, and numerous businesses. There is one shopping mall in the community which contains several well-known department stores. New construction of housing subdivisions and strip malls is ongoing.

The River City community also serves as a major stop-over for area tourists. There are several national motel chains in the community and they were observed to be full most of the time. Also, because of its location next to the reservation, travelers through the area would base their day trips from River City.

Two Mountains, on the other hand, does not have a large business sector. Tribal headquarters is located about two hours away, but the Two Mountains Chapter House is located on the main highway running through town. The Chapter House

serves as the political and social headquarters for the people of the community. Voting, chapter council meetings, and social activities are all scheduled there. The Navajo people of the surrounding reservation area gather daily at the junction of the two major highways in town to sell homemade goods and food. This "flea market" serves as a major source of income for the rural reservation families in the area.

There is no available public transportation and private transportation is a luxury among the reservation population. It is not uncommon to see whole families riding in an older pick-up truck with all of the children riding in the back bed. The roadway easements between Two Mountains and River City are heavy with foot traffic and hitchhikers most of the time.

The economy of Two Mountains is based on tribal economic endeavors. There are two major gas plants in the area which employ many Navajo people. Additionally, the coal-fired generating plants south of town serve as major employers as well. There are no motels or chain restaurants in the community, so travelers often must go on to River City or north to other regional hubs for services.

It was observed that the Navajo neighborhoods of the

region are more heavily located nearer or on the reservation. There are three small towns between the reservation and River City, and all of these were predominantly Navajo populated. The Anglo community resides in the newer subdivisions on the north and east side of River City and in suburbs to the east. The stratification lines were clearly evident in the area, with the Native population surviving near the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder.

Institutional Observations The first two visits to the region and the institutions under study were exploratory. After visiting historical sites and tribal headquarters, the "qualified informants" for the study were asked to describe Navajo customs and to locate the appropriate telephone numbers for each of the institutions under study. The "qualified informants" also provided critical guidance by explaining that most of the student population would have to be accessed at the two schools, because most of them did not have telephones. With this information in hand, the Dean of Student's at each institution was approached and each granted permission for the study to be performed. Both of the Deans were helpful in providing current institutional evaluation reports and in answering any questions.

The River City Dean was Anglo and had recently completed his doctoral work. Thus, he was very aware of the need for appropriate documentation. Interestingly, the River City Dean did not take any time discussing the overall operation of the River City campus, nor did he perform a guided tour of the campus. It was apparent that the River City campus obviously "spoke for itself" in terms of technological capacity, architecture, academic offerings, cleanliness, and professionalism. The River City Dean appeared confident that "his campus {sic}" needed no verbal frills or explanations. Rather, his approach was very formal and business-like. He did contact the director of institutional reports to facilitate acquisition of the latest institutional evaluation report.

On the other hand, the Two Mountains Dean was quite young and had not begun any graduate work. He had some difficulty understanding the need for institutional documentation, but was very proud of the Two Mountains facility and gave a guided tour of the institution. Additionally, he explained what his plans were for the future of the institution. He was very talkative and appreciative of any interest in "his campus{sic}". He voluntarily demonstrated the newest computer lab that had

been installed and introduced several students who were working on research projects in the library. Furthermore, he introduced two staff members who had spent an extraordinary amount of time with GED and ABE students. These initial visits provided the groundwork for future institutional observations.

Throughout the study, trips were made back to each institution and time was spent observing and interviewing staff and students. The institutional observations were conducted in the dining centers, libraries, hall-ways, and classrooms. At times, observations were made in the parking lots surrounding both institutions.

During the visits to the River City campus, a sense of definite purpose, not evident at the Two Mountains campus, was observed. In other words, the staff and students at River City appeared to be more focused and goal oriented than those at Two Mountains. For example, at the River City campus, staff members seemed to "always be working". They did not stop and visit with one another except during break periods. On one occasion, the secretary to the director of institutional reports, did not seem too pleased when asked for a moment of her time. In fact, she insisted that both she and the director were "too busy" to visit at that

particular moment. As a result, another trip back to that office was necessary. Moreover, the volume of students coming and going to and from classes at the River City campus appeared to necessitate a more professional atmosphere.

One of the more interesting observations that occurred at the River City campus was the apparent paucity of Native people in professional positions. The secretarial, dining center, janitorial, and physical plant positions were filled by Hispanic or Native staff members. On one occasion a Navajo male was observed working with students in a counseling office. Upon inquiry, it was learned that he was in fact a student services counselor. Additionally, the director of the Native Student's office at River City was Hispanic. The other upper-level management positions were held by Anglos.

In terms of the student population at River City, the Native students "stuck together" in class settings and on break-times. No children were seen in the hallways, nor were families viewed waiting for a member to emerge from class. This differed significantly from the Two Mountains campus.

The Two Mountains campus was definitely more "laid

back". For example, the staff at the Two Mountains facility always had time to visit with one another and with students. While it was obvious that "work" was being accomplished, the sense of "hurriedness" was not the norm. Faculty were often viewed discussing classroom matters with students as well as family problems and issues such as finances, transportation, and housing. Additionally, it was not at all uncommon to see whole families, "grandparents, parents, and small children" waiting for a student to emerge from a classroom at Two Mountains.

The interactions between the younger students at Two Mountains were reminiscent of a typical high school. Laughter and casual bantering were apparent during class changes and break times. It was not unusual to see a group of young women with two or three preschool children in tow. Upon inquiry, it was learned that frequently one of the young women would "babysit" with the youngsters while the others were in class. This appeared to facilitate the educational process of these single mothers by eliminating the logistical problem of child-care.

One of the more significant observations was the fact that the Two Mountains campus was in desperate need of renovation and maintenance. For example, it was observed

that students must wait in line to access the available computer labs, although one of the labs had a pile of computer hard-ware in the corner of the room. Upon inquiry, it was learned that the maintenance staff had not had the time to connect the hard-ware, and that the campus was waiting for additional network servers to be installed. However, these issues did not appear to concern the students. The students "felt" at home at Two Mountains and viewed it as not only a place to acquire skills and knowledge, but also as a place to socialize with friends. These observations differed significantly from the River City campus.

At River City, the students always appeared to be "on their way to class or work". The River City campus was not viewed as a place to socialize, rather it was a place to "acquire skills and get a job". The students at River City did not live on "Indian Time" so to speak.

In recalling the objectives of this research, the question of whether cultural norms and values facilitated or impeded Navajo adult education definitely came to the forefront in the on-site observation phase. For example, at the Two Mountains campus, the entire philosophy of the system is based on Navajo traditional ways of living which

places human life in harmony with the natural world and universe.

This philosophy provides principles which contribute to the student's identity, confidence and self esteem, and empowers him or her to be successful in any circumstance. Not only are academic subjects offered, but the institution also makes available Navajo arts and crafts courses, and many courses are offered in the Navajo language. These characteristics provided a comfortable atmosphere for the Navajo adult student.

While it was not uncommon for many of the Two Mountains students to have dropped out of high school in order to start families, the Two Mountains philosophy was accepting of these issues. These problems were often compounded by logistical situations when these same students decided to pursue a post-secondary education. For example, quite frequently the Navajo adult student must drive long distances to attend any type of educational setting. Thus, transportation and money for gas were definitely problematic. It was observed that in many instances, students car-pooled with one another or had family members drop them off on their way to some job in River City. Regardless of the issues that confronted the Two Mountains

students, the institution's philosophy and practices regarding Navajo culture assisted each student in feeling accepted culturally and individually.

The River City campus supports a very different philosophy and approaches its mission in a more generic academic manner. For example, individual student problems were referred to counselors and logistical problems were left to the student to resolve. Transportation, dependent care issues, and financial constraints were not viewed as institutional, let alone faculty, concerns. Although the River City campus did produce graduates and did have a larger student population base, the philosophy and principles were not implemented to insure that each student complete a program designed to meet their individual needs. It was clear that individual student outcomes took a back seat to overall student enrollment numbers.

In summary, the on-site observations of this study provided for a clearer view of each community's socioeconomic well-being and each institution's overall operational approach. The data indicated that each of these two institutions were diametrically different in practice and delivery methods.

The Two Mountains campus was designed to meet the needs

of Navajo adult students, regardless of their backgrounds or resources. Moreover, the Two Mountains facility set in motion the cultural expectations of the Navajo people. Because of the Two Mountains philosophy, it was observed that a traditional Navajo adult would receive a more traditional education according to tribal norms and values. It was observed that the Navajo students who did not view themselves as traditional Navajos were less likely to readily accept the offerings of the Two Mountains campus.

The River City campus did serve a relatively large Native population. However, observations indicated that the Native population at River City was not homogenous, rather, the Apache, Navajo, and Ute tribes were all represented. The philosophical approach at River City did not focus on any one Native group's customs or expectations. Rather, the approach was geared for immediate employment in the surrounding community regardless of an individual student's tribal identity. Traditional Navajo students were not as comfortable at the River City campus. It was observed that the Native students who were enrolled at River City were less traditional in their practice of Navajo customs, language, and belief systems than the students at Two Mountains.

It should be recalled from the content analysis phase of this study that the Two Mountains campus had a much higher cohort retention rate than did the River City campus. Thus, the question of whether degree of assimilation or cultural marginality affects a Native student's retention rate appears to have emerged. The next section of this research, the interview stage, will continue to discuss the findings of the study. Additionally, the last section of this chapter will address the emergent findings.

Conversations with the People: The Interview Component

The results of the interview process were acquired from two primary groups, professional educators and students. However, nine non-students were also included as interview participants in order to facilitate triangulation. The results of the interviews have been separated and categorized according to "group affiliation", meaning whether the respondent was considered a professional educator, student or non-student. Additionally, in analyzing the data obtained from the interview phase, it was perceived necessary to describe the participants demographically in order to obtain a realistic picture of their backgrounds and experiences.

The interview process was carried out over a period of several weeks during different semesters of two academic years and took place at both institutions under study. Setting up appointments with program directors and faculty members was not difficult, however, tracking down the students and non-students became much more involved and time consuming.

As was discussed in chapter three, the interview schedule was constructed to elicit information around three key themes: cultural factors which may inhibit or enhance Navajo adult participation in education; institutional structure factors which may inhibit or enhance Navajo adult participation in education; and programs or activities that appear to assist in attracting and retaining the Navajo adult student in educational settings. These three themes address the research objectives regarding cultural issues, institutional structure issues, and educational programming issues. For a complete copy of the interview schedule see Appendix B.

The results of the interview phase have been categorized to address each one of the aforementioned themes. Furthermore, each of these three categories has been segmented into three subsections. The subsections

offer the interview findings of each of the three groups of participants: students, educational professionals, and non-students. Students, refers to those individuals who were actually enrolled at either of the institutions during the time of the study. Educational professionals, refers to those individuals who were currently teaching or providing professional services to the student populations at either of the institutions under study. Non-students, refers to those individuals who were not enrolled as students at either of the two institutions during the course of the study.

Cultural Themes Cultural forces are those forces or factors which are unique to a particular cultural group. They include such nonmaterial aspects as customs, belief systems, normative expectations for behavior, and values (Tischler, 1996). In particular, Navajo cultural factors include such issues as "matriarchal family structure, harmony with nature, extended families, cooperativeness with others, disregard for personal wealth, and witchcraft" (Deyhle, 1995; Locke, 1992).

These types of cultural issues were discussed frequently by the interviewees in this study. The following sub-sections will offer participant narratives as they

pertain to the cultural theme of the study. The first participant group includes the Professional Educators.

The Professional Educators on the Issue of Culture The professional educator group of participants varied in their job descriptions from a political science professor to an ABE and GED Program Director. Three men and five women agreed to participate and all were currently employed by one or the other of the two institutions under study. All of these participants were extremely helpful and talked at length about their experiences working with Navajo students.

Each interview took approximately one hour and typically occurred within offices or empty classrooms, although one interview occurred over the telephone because of time and distance restrictions. Two of the participants were also helpful in describing their lives on the reservation which assisted in clarifying issues involving norms and tribal values.

When asked about their views regarding cultural issues of the Navajo people which may inhibit or enhance the education of adult students, the responses did not vary to a great degree. For example, one Native Program Director indicated that:

...many Navajo adults are scared of coming to school

because they are afraid they will fail. They are not certain that they have the background to do good in school. They do not want to leave their families, especially the women, and are worried that they cannot do the work and care for their homes at the same time. These women... many do not have washers and dryers and things like you people do...

The political science professor suggested:

...these people have been put down too many times by the white man so they assume the same will happen if they try coming to school. Uh, they have not had a great number of positive experiences with education in general, particularly education on the rez...

This same individual went on to state:

...the family life is very important to the Navajo, the community is important...much more than any big government, and they fear that their educations may cause conflict with their communities and families. Community values are strongly held by the people...and one of the worst insults you can give a Navajo person is to say they act like they have no family.

When the participants were asked to explain what community and cultural control seemed to mean to Navajo

adult students, one science instructor indicated the following:

> ...you see, the Navajo culture is so intact on the reservation. The reservation is isolated in most places and doesn't have too much Anglo influence. In border areas the sense of cultural loss is more apparent, and the people do not like that feeling. I know of one male student who dropped out because he was feeling torn in two directions. He did not want to give up being Indian, yet to get a good job he would have to leave the reservation. That would mean leaving his culture, leaving his family home and so forth...not good, for him or his family.

One of the Native Program counselors suggested:

> ...education is like a double-edge sword, it is good if it helps the family unit, you know, to help make money for food or sheep...but it is not seen as good if it takes away from the family. Jobs are scarce on the reservation, unless you go to work for the tribe or the feds or one of the power plants...so education can help that way. But if a person can't find a job on the reservation then they will have to leave and that just wouldn't work for most people.

Thus, it appeared that family and community ties were two of the more influential cultural issues which affect whether or not a Navajo adult student would attempt post-secondary schooling. Loss of control and perceived loss of traditional values were two concerns that appeared to cause adult students to question the value of education. However, family support for education could be viewed as a positive influence on adult students. In other words, if the family believed in education's merits, then so would the student. Education was viewed as a way to "stay out of trouble" and "off the whiskey trail".

Another major cultural issue which continued to arise during the interviews was the language factor. As the ABE and GED Program Director stated:

> ...many of our adult students still use the Navajo language at home and with family members. The problem seems to be that if they were schooled at BIA schools then they were taught English, but not very well. So, many of these adults come into my office with poor English skills, either oral or written. This intimidates them.

A science professor also suggested that language problems exist for many of her students:

...I had to rethink how to teach such things as "germ theory" to my nursing students, because of their limited English usage. You see, the Navajo language doesn't have a word for germ, and much disease is thought to be caused by disharmony with the world. Because of the language differences and problems, too many students won't even consider enrolling in a program. Here at Two Mountains though, we are using the Navajo language to teach in many classes. This is helping get rid of the intimidation and increases self-esteem...When I taught at a grade school deeper in the rez, I could not believe that the ESL texts were Puerto Rican "Spanish" books. It is no wonder so many of our students have problems with English today...those texts had no meaning for Navajo kids or adults for that matter...I don't know why they used them.

The last major cultural issue which the professional educator group viewed as problematic was that of the time perspective. Navajo time or Indian time as many would call it was clearly "out of sync" with Anglo time expectations and perspectives. For example, the political science instructor believed that:

Reservation Navajos just think about time differently

than you or I do. The future is not meaningful, nor is the immediate past. For example, one of our students who has gone on to a great career at Los Alamos laboratory majored in nuclear physics. Well, if you know anything about physics, you can see how time perspectives can be restrictive in terms of research. By not looking to the future, this guy can think of the present and be totally comfortable with his findings. He does not expect more than what is present...

One of the Native Program Directors stated:

Indian time is present oriented, it just doesn't concern itself with later on...this does cause problems when I need to help these students plan out degree programs. They want to be in control of their time, and um... future planning is uncomfortable for them. But, if I don't do it, then I'm not doing my job for them. It is harder, I think, to feel like you know what needs to happen, but they (the students) do not think the same way. I guess if a two year program takes five years, then at least they have finished something good. Sometimes though, I don't feel okay about that. I have trouble talking this over with my boss, they want numbers and sometimes I can't give it

to them. We just have to work through it.

Family issues, time perspective differences, and language usage issues all appeared to have a perceived impact on whether or not a Navajo adult would access some type of post-secondary education. The perceptions of the professional educators appeared to suggest that family support is necessary if a student attempts to perform well academically. Also, the faculty and staff of both institutions suggested that the present-oriented time focus of the Native population was problematic under certain circumstances, but that it was deeply ingrained as a part of the culture.

Conversations with Non-Students on the Issue of Culture

The non-student participants also had interesting views about Navajo culture and how cultural issues can either be a barrier to or could motivate adults into participating in post-secondary education. The oldest participant of all the respondents, Mrs. Begay, who was nearing her 100 year birthday, discussed education in the following way:

> (the following was interpreted by "Mom" because Mrs. Begay does not speak English well)...dey say dat education will help my granchilren...I do not know 'bout dis, but dey jus sit all day...sun up to sun

down...not do anyting. Dey mus have job and dey mus go to de school. Our people, de Navajo...need to tink ourself...education can help dat. I want for my granchilren to go and tink for de people...my youngest son, Sammy, he no go to school...he jus take my tings...and drink. He not help his people dat way.

(She indicated then that I was from far over the mountains where the sun rises and I should come back sometime-this indicated that she was tired of talking about her problems).

Another of the non-students, who was a nurse's aid and who characterized the feelings of several of the non-student participants, stated:

> ...you know, my degree is in Social Work, but they won't let me do that here, so I got this job at the hospital. I guess if I was Anglo they would hire me over at the Human Services office...I don't know. I think that the Navajo people and our culture...its hard for us to go to school and get a good job around here. All the whites keep them for themselves, not us. I got my social work at a four-year school away from here...away from home, but I still can't get the job I want. I thought about goin' on to get my Master's, but then I would have to leave and go to Los Vegas or

somewhere...I don't want to leave home again, and leave my mom and family. I need to be here to help out...So, I guess that our culture, our families, the way we think about things keeps many of us from leaving. It gets real depressing sometimes, thinking that you can do more if you just had a chance...you know, but I'm Indian so they won't hire me for the good jobs.

A middle-age female, who was working in the Chapter House at Two Mountains, suggested the following regarding the cultural factors:

> Culture does not make a person go to school...our culture is the backbone of our people...it is what you fall back on when things are hard. So, I guess if a student felt good about their culture and used it for support, then that would help them get through. I think that is true for any Navajo person...the culture is who we are. The "kids" over there at Two Mountains are learning and practicing our culture...it will help them be successful in their lives and with their families. The family is important...the education should not take away from the family.

The last non-student participant also had earned a

Bachelor's degree, but was thinking of working on a Master's in Education so he could teach on the reservation. He suggested:

> I believe that education is good for my people, we need more jobs on the reservation, we need the younger ones to do more than drink and party. My family was supportive of me to go on to college, my basketball coach in high school was also the one who helped me get scholarships and things so I could go. I think that family is important and we have to help each other, but we have to know the "real world too" not just reservation. Every time I leave the rez, they have a ceremony for me, then when I come back we have another one to get rid of the bad things. This is good, it is our tradition...but we have to know about life outside of here...that is why I want to teach. I want to show the younger ones that they can have both worlds. They have to have a strong identity...to know who they are. But, they need to be able to work in the white's way too. I want my sister to get her degree, and get a good job. Now, she is taking care of granny...and granny takes care of Verlin so he has money for college. It kinda goes in circles I guess...

These respondents all believed that home, meaning the reservation, was the place for Navajo people to be for the most part, however, they felt that education was needed for jobs and to maintain the family unit. The nurse's aid, however, did express that the Anglos reserved the "good" jobs for themselves. This issue appeared to deter many Navajos from even working on their educations, because they did not perceive education as benefitting them economically in the long run. The perceptions of the non-students suggested that Navajo cultural values should provide some level of support to the Native population. For example, the cultural values should be seen as a source of strength and continuity for students.

Views of the Students on the Question of Culture The last group to be interviewed about cultural issues was the student respondents. These participants ranged in age from twenty-one years to 44 years. The majority of them were women, which is in proportion to their representation at both of the institutions under study.

The interviewees expressed a variety of opinions about the cultural factors that either inhibit or enhance adult participation, however, three basic themes emerged from these discussions. These were the issues of family needs,

economics, and traditional values. Two of the younger women who were attending Two Mountains at the time expressed their opinions in much the same way:

> I dropped out of school when I was a junior (in high school) because I got pregnant. Now I have two kids and I live with my parents here in Two Mountains. I didn't like school before now, but now I want to get a good job. My sister-in-law got me comin' here...she's so worn out that she said she didn't want me to have her problems...you know, she has six kids and lives way out on the rez...it is hard...our tradition says we need to listen to our family, my mom, she don't want me here...she says I need to stay home and take care of my kids. I want to get out of here, get a job and be okay. I still like to go out with my friends, but they aren't goin' anywhere...just party...I don't think I can get a good job here anyway, I want to be a vet, so I need to decide what to do.

Another of the student participants expressed his problems coming to school in the following way:

> We live thirty miles from here...it's a hard drive some of the times. My grandmother, she says I need to come

to school to help the family better. It is comfortable here at Two Mountains, they are helping me get on with the Power Plant. I have to live in two worlds now, not just reservation...but I want to stay Navajo, keep my beliefs...I don't know why it is this way, the white way is not our way, but that is where I can get on makin' some money. My Mom brings her things she makes here to sell, but it's not enough to live, so I need to get better work. There is no work out there on the rez...sheep, horses and things...

The student group believed that family traditions and responsibilities were important factors in determining whether or not an individual would consider attending some type of post secondary education. If an individual's attendance would upset the family structure, then the less likely the individual would be to actually enroll. The potential for better jobs appeared to be a motivating factor, yet many expressed concern about leaving the reservation and giving up the traditional way of life.

Again, family desires and community responsibilities were important issues that appeared to create either a supportive environment for students, or could dissuade an individual from pursuing an education. The potential

economic benefits which are often associated with advanced education did not appear to override perceived family issues. Thus, the Navajo culture appears to be very family oriented, and the Navajo value of community precedence over individuality appeared to have had a direct influence on whether an individual participated in education as an adult.

Institutional Structure Theme The next interview theme involves the institutional structure factors that inhibit or enhance Navajo adult participation in education and are those issues which can be described as policies, programs, and practices which occur within the institutional setting (Badwound and Tierney, 1988; Van Hamme, 1996; McInerney and Swisher, 1995). Again, the results of the three interviewee groups have been broken down and are discussed in the following sub-sections.

Professional Educators' Views of the Institutions The professional educators were the most verbal of the three participant groups. They expressed a variety of ideas from their experiences serving Navajo adult students, many of which differed dramatically from any written official policy. One of the Native Program counselors at Two Mountains stated:

Our whole mission is to preserve the Navajo culture, so

> if a student is interested in the Navajo tradition, then we can probably help them the best. We use the Navajo language in many classes, and want to make sure that each student starts out at their level. We can't be River City or some big school, but we can serve students who want to learn the Navajo way.

A Native Program counselor at River City believed:

> When they (the students) come here, we help them to get financial aid from their tribe. Sometimes the tribes are hard to deal with...they take a long time. We have lots of computer labs, so if a student needs help they can go there...we can't take a lot of time with them...too many.

The faculty members at River City did state that they had all received a one day in-service on Native student values, norms, and learning styles before they first began teaching. They all felt that additional in-service time would be beneficial in order for them to better assist the Native students. None of the River City faculty participants spoke Navajo, but they did indicate that a few staff persons spoke Navajo fairly fluently. The River City faculty also indicated that their campus was for the community members use as well, so the focus had to be more

generic and open for any perceived need or use.

A math and science instructor from Two Mountains had much to offer regarding policy, programs, and practice:

> The tribal offices in Window Rock don't always pass on the information that we need...or the students need to do the best job. There are differences between Window Rock and the rest of the rez...As a teacher, I know that my students cannot use a lot of the stuff I teach them, because it goes against the Navajo way, but I keep thinking, ok...what if they leave the reservation...then what? We have to find a balance and we have to help our students find a balance...Teaching Native students means that you have to be flexible. What I learned in ed school hasn't helped me one bit out here...I learned as I went. We have to respect our students and their culture, or we don't get anywhere. We need more Native speakers in the classroom...the tribe needs to push young people to try education so they can teach. I've been here a long time, and I have seen changes...technology is gonna do a lot for these people, if we can get out to them.

At tribal headquarters, an older gentleman with the office of post-secondary programs and financial aid stated the

following:

> We used to really push business and engineering programs on the younger ones, but we see now that we need more Navajo teachers...so we push teacher education. We also have started our bridge programs. Now, if a high school student wants financial aid from the tribe, they have to go through a bridge program. These last for six weeks in the summer and we get the kids into culture classes, prep classes and used to dormitory life. The bridge programs have helped keep the young ones from washing out. We keep the majority of the tribal money for returning students to use...course, they will have to apply for it. Every year we receive 15,000 applications for financial aid, we can only help 800 or so...we have to weed out those who will not make it through the first year. The tribe has determined that the three reasons for why students don't make it at college are: funding, culture shock, and lack of academic training. Returning students are a much better risk for us.

Cross-cultural training and dominant culture explanation appeared to be one of the more important institutional factors that assisted Navajo students in

accepting post-secondary education. This training was also an important factor for faculty and staff as well. Courses and programs that served this purpose were necessary according to all of these professionals.

One of the business teachers suggested that Navajo students needed to experience "real life work". She believed that internships and practical work experience would help Navajo students make the transition from reservation life to a work-setting easier. She stated:

> Navajo students...who come from the reservation, need to get off Indian time, and face reality. If they want to work off the reservation, then they have to get used to business and industry or they won't have a job for long. I have too many who don't understand what a transcript means or that they have to dress right and so forth. Internships would help out a lot.

Another institutional program, which seemed to be working successfully for the Two Mountains campus, was the Navajo arts and crafts program. When the Learning Lab assistant was asked to describe the rationale for the program, she answered:

> The arts and crafts program builds Navajo self-esteem. We have seen beautiful works of art come out of

here...see the walls, these are drawings by our students. (The halls were covered with pen and ink, pencil, and watercolor posters). We help our students understand that what they do at home, you know...the rugs, silver and things, all of that is our culture's gift...it is important. This program is about being Indian, being Navajo...oh...just being proud.

It appeared that the two institutions differed in how each approached Native learners. Also, each institution's faculty and staff had polarized views, at times, of how Navajo students could have better educational experiences. The next group, the non-student group, further elaborated on the institutional structure issue.

Perceptions of Non-Students on Institutional Factors

The nurse's aid offered the following:

River City is a nice place. So clean and beautiful. I have not taken courses there, but have thought about it a few times...you know, just for fun. But, I don't know when I would have time. I want my daughter to get back at it though. She wants to be a teacher...she would have to go somewhere else though to finish. My daughter and me, even though we are...Navajo...we probably wouldn't go over to Two Mountains. Its

ok...but just not for us.

Another of the non-student participants, a young Navajo male, stated:

> Two Mountains is for real "skins". They teach in Navajo...River City...that's too uptown...you know what I mean. We need to keep our culture goin'...River City don't care 'bout none of that stuff. Its for other people.

An older female, who had once been a student at River City while living on the reservation expressed the following:

> ...back when I went over there, I had just gotten finished raising my kids. The teacher I had in a computer class, he never would call on me or my three friends. He always called on the whites. We felt left out, like we were dumb or something. It was a bad feeling...they wanted us to know all these things, but how was I to know about reading literature, I didn't have time to read raising four kids.

One of the younger males, who was found sitting in the library offered the following:

> I am not a student here, I just come here to look at books and read magazines while my sister goes to class. I don't know whether I will come here, but I think all

the people are nice, they don't mind if I just sit here. This place is for all us Navajos. They got my sister a lot of money to help pay...you know it is better than not having a job.

It was apparent that the non-student group believed that the Two Mountains campus was designed to accommodate a more traditional Navajo lifestyle, whereas River City focused more on skill and knowledge acquisition for the workplace. The next sub-section will offer the views of the student group regarding institutional structures.

Student Perspectives of the Institutions The student group expressed their views of the institutional factors by focusing on why they had chosen one campus over the other. Although this was not an issue in terms of the interview questions, by indicating institutional preference, the student interviewees appeared more at ease in explaining their views. For example, an older woman, who was nearing the end of her program in business expressed the following:

I have liked it here at River City...the teachers have tried to get us ready...I want to get a job at a bank and work to make good money. We do not live on the reservation, just over at Hilltop, so the drive wouldn't be bad. My family is grown now...I think I

should work...help my kids out...you know be more productive I guess...

One of the younger males at Two Mountains talked about his experiences with the institution and stated:

...Mr. Lawrence, he has been real good to help me get ready to take classes. I dropped out of high school and needed help with my math and so I came here...this ABE program is good for people like us here...(we were in the study room) we study together and get ready to take the test...We need more of this in our other towns...you know...on the rez. The rez schools really don't let us study this way...we have to be alone.

Another Two Mountains student, a female in her twenties, stated:

I come here because of the Navajo...I don't want to be in the white school. I am learning more of my language, I can talk with my grandmother more now...she speaks Navajo. I don't know what I want to do really, but I like the feeling here, we understand each other I think. My family likes me to come here...River City is for others...like...the ones off the rez...we want to keep our traditions, this place can help us do that.

One of the females at Two Mountains expressed her views in

the following way:

> You know I started back to school because of my husband's wondering eye. He liked to run around, so when my kids got old enough, I started to school. I went to River City, then up to Colorado for awhile, now I am here. I help out in the language lab because I speak Navajo. I want to get a degree in English and teach. The campus people here do help me...they want me to do okay, my husband, he still does not like me coming to school, but my cousin, he says I need to be self-sufficient. I never felt at home over at River City, it is more white than Navajo. I never thought that the teachers liked us over there...

It became apparent that River City students viewed themselves and were viewed by others as having experienced a greater degree of assimilation. Navajo cultural norms and values were not emphasized at River City, whereas they were at Two Mountains. Most of the student participants expressed their perspectives of the institutions based on their reasons for choosing one school over the other. In other words, cultural marginality and degree of assimilation appeared to be significant factors in institutional selection. The problems associated with assimilation and

cultural marginality will be discussed further in the emergent findings section later in this chapter.

Educational Programs and Activities Theme The final theme of the interview segment focused on the issues of specialized programs and classroom delivery methods that appeared to enhance or inhibit the educational participation and progress of Navajo students. As Beaty and Beaty-Chiste (1986) and Van Hamme (1996) have suggested, educational programming for Native students must appreciate the unique differences between the Anglo-European models and the Native approaches to learning. Cooperativeness, quality student counseling and advisement which understands time and financial constraints, and faculty awareness of Native traditions are all factors which appear to affect Native student progress. Like before, the findings associated with this theme have been broken down according to interviewee group affiliation. First, the professional educator category will be reviewed.

Professional Educators Review of Educational Programs The political science instructor offered the following comments regarding the issue:

> I think that the most important programs or offerings we can do for the Navajo student is to allow them to

feel secure about who they are. Around here, the Indians are looked down on by the whites. They usually don't get the good jobs and they usually don't live in the best of places. As an educator, I feel responsible to these students. They have a right to develop, to grow, and learn...some of my colleagues don't think we should give any special consideration to any student. I think they are here just for the paycheck. I can't control how the other faculty members act, I just try to help as many students as I can each day. I know of one faculty member who actually kicked a student out of his class because he had brought his son to class. Now what kind of person is that, like they have never been in a tight spot...like I said...we have to be flexible sometimes.

One of the Navajo language instructors at Two Mountains stated the following:

> We have so many students in here with poor language skills. I sometimes wonder what they were taught in school...but we take them and get them competent. They have to pass at a seventy percent pass rate before we give them a grade. That way, we know they learned the material...we are not so much focused on the time thing

as River City...if it takes a student two years to do one semester's work, then it takes them two years. We just make sure they learn. I think that is more important anyway...you know, my grandmother--she was Navajo--she always said, take all the time you need but do the work right the first time...it is better in the long run. That is our way here at Two Mountains, take the time to do it right. Navajo students sometimes need more time because of their family duties and things.

One of the Native Student's Counselors suggested:

We need to have reliable daycare centers here on campus. So many of our students, especially the younger Native ones, have small children that they have to bring with them or miss class. Another thing, I think that the tribes need to do a much better job of releasing financial aid money to the students...they always have to wait a long time for their money. Sometimes, they don't get to buy books until later in the semester because of it.

The next category, the non-students, also had much to offer in terms of their views of what educational programs or activities could enhance or inhibit the Navajo student's

participation levels.

Perceptions of Non-Students on Educational Activities

The nurse's aid suggested the following, based on her daughter's experiences with post-secondary education.

> My daughter, she has always had trouble identifying with both whites and with Navajos...except family of course. She is half white and half Navajo, and has blonde hair. She understands her Native culture, but she doesn't practice it. I wish that she could feel more comfortable being Indian...she tries...but sometimes it gets to her. When she was in school, she was teased about bein' an apple...red on the outside, white on the inside. The kids weren't too with it on that one. She doesn't have a Navajo name, and with her blonde hair, she doesn't look Navajo...so most of the time the teachers didn't know she was Indian. I think she got treated alittle better because she didn't look Indian. Now me, I look Indian, so I get treated like an Indian even though I got a degree in social work...guess looks count for everything. I really don't think she could do okay at Two Mountains, because...she doesn't look Navajo. It gets tough for her a lot.

One of the older female participants suggested:

> The schools are so different now than when I was young. We have more Navajo teachers, I think that is good. The young ones should think about teaching...helping keep the culture. I hear they got Navajo language over at Two Mountains, that is what we need...it will keep our language strong. The young should know how to build hogans and use corn pollen, all these things...it is important. Even though I don't live in a hogan, I still know how to enter...who to speak to and all that. These younger ones need to know all that.

A younger male, who was working in a restaurant stated:

> I used to go to River City at night. I liked the scheduling there. I have to work...so night classes were the only way. I married a Navajo girl...I'm Sioux and Creek from Oklahoma. I did take the Navajo culture class at Two Mountains when I first got out here though, it helped me to understand my wife and her family better. My wife plans to go to Two Mountains starting next spring...I want her to go so she can get a good job. It's too hard with just my check from here...my wife wants to go to Two Mountains, her family is more traditional, and she wants to take some

of the Navajo language classes. I support her all the way...

The non-students focused on such things as language, culture and traditions. They believed that these things were necessary for most Navajo students to succeed in education and in feeling good about their culture. Feeling comfortable about being Indian was viewed important because it increased their sense of self-esteem. Course scheduling was suggested as important, though, for those students who worked. The next and last group category to discuss the theme of programs and activities was the student category. Their ideas are offered in the next sub-section.

Student Experiences with Specialized Programs One of the younger females at Two Mountains expressed her views in the following way:

> This place, it is closest to my home. I don't have a way to get to River City. I like it here though...the classes are not competitive...we all work together. That is important to me. The teachers...they work with us when we have trouble understanding. My math teacher, he lets me turn in my assignments late if I need to...one of my friends, who goes over to River City, got an F because she turned in

her assignment late. That doesn't happen here.

Another young female, who was working in the library at River City offered the following:

> I come here because I want to be an engineer, and because it is closer to my home. Two Mountains does not have a pre-engineering program anyway. I plan to go to Fort Keys after I graduate from here...we don't have a four year program here, so I know I have to leave eventually...

When asked if she was a work-study, the same student continued by stating:

> Yes, the school got me this job...I can work here and still go to classes. Two Mountains didn't have anything like that when my friends checked it out. I like the atmosphere here, everyone is professional and wants to do well. I have a lot of friends who go here too. I think you have to be more self-sufficient if you come here though, the teachers expect you to do your work on time and stuff like that...

One older female, who was taking a Navajo language class suggested:

> When I first started to college, I was scared to death. I had not been in school for over twenty years. All

the younger people seemed to know so much more than me. The teachers here at Two Mountains, all the staff...everyone is close...we really care what happens to each other. I don't know how I would do anywhere else...I just think that people like me, I'm Navajo, need to be with our own people. I don't worry that someone will make fun of me...that is not the Navajo way. We don't point fingers...we find solutions. I know that some of the students have trouble getting money to come, but most of the time the counselors can find money to pay for tuition and books.

The last student participant, a younger male, suggested:

I just wish that I had known more about the outside world when I was in high school...you know, I dropped out 'cause I wanted to get a job and make money. My family wanted me to stay in school, but we needed money. I started back to school three semesters ago...its been hard...gettin' back into the studying. I come to River City because of the scheduling and it is easier to drive here. I just live over in Watertown, so it is not far. I'm takin' business classes so I can get on with the gas plants in the office. My dad, he can't work anymore, so it is just

me and my mom to make money...it gets hard sometimes. My sister and her family live with us too. The thing that probably has helped the most here, is the number of classes. I can work around when I have jobs...I haven't ever applied to the tribe for money it takes too much time...I would only get 400.00 dollars...

The student category expressed the idea that for those Navajo students who felt more comfortable in a less competitive environment, and who needed to experience a more traditional Navajo setting would likely perform better at Two Mountains. The River City campus was viewed as offering a greater number of classes which provided more opportunities for those students who needed to work while attending school.

Additionally, the students indicated that time, distance, and transportation issues were also considered when selecting the institution of choice. It was observed that the River City students expressed a greater degree of career aspiration than did the Two Mountains students. Again, professional direction and career planning were key issues that were mentioned by the students. River City did offer more in the way of career counseling to students, both through faculty members and through the counseling offices.

The last sub-section of this chapter will present the emergent findings of the data collection process in addition to summarizing the findings of the four data collection methods. The emergent findings resulted from the interview process, but were not intended to be the focus of the research. However, these findings do factor into the theoretical foundation of the study and warrant discussion.

Emergent Findings and Data Summary

Assimilation and the sense of cultural marginality were two themes which emerged during the interview phase of the study. While these themes were not the focal point of the study, they did arise on several occasions. It was believed that these themes warranted discussion.

Although none of the participants actually stated that they felt culturally marginal, the sense of being pulled in two directions was evident among some of them. Assimilation has been defined by Gordon (1964) as the process whereby acculturation on the part of non-dominant cultural groups causes them to become like the dominant culture in cultural patterns, such as language usage, behavior, and values. Park (1928) suggested that cultural marginality occurs when individuals believe they must practice the cultural ways of

two cultures simultaneously. Moreover, these same individuals never actually belong to a particular culture, which results in a heightened sense of marginality.

Emergent Findings Although none of the interview participants expressly stated that assimilation or cultural marginality had created problems for them or family members, the issue was apparent. For example, as the student participants were interviewed, they continually vocalized their institutional selection choices based on their individual perceptions of belongingness. None of the interview questions expressly asked for an explanation of institutional selection, the interviewees offered the information voluntarily during the conversations.

Further, nearly all of the participants based their institutional selection choice on their cultural background. For example, the participants who perceived themselves and were perceived by others as being more traditional regarding the practice of Navajo ways more often chose to attend the Two Mountains institution. Two Mountains is based on Navajo traditional ways in its mission and philosophy.

On the other hand, those participants, who perceived themselves as less traditional regarding the Navajo way of living and more Anglo-like in their occupational choices or

aspirations, were more likely to select River City as the institution of choice. River City offers a generic approach to education in that the mission statement and delivery methods are closely aligned with community colleges elsewhere in the United States.

The traditional Navajo participants affirmed that the cooperative learning environment, the decreased focus on time, and the usage of the Navajo language all were important reasons for choosing to attend Two Mountains, and why they continued to progress educationally. The Two Mountains participants appeared to need a greater sense of belonging than the students at River City.

The River City students were not as likely to converse at length about their experiences as students, nor were the educational professionals at River City. This group of participants was observed to be more time conscious and focused on their immediate tasks than the Two Mountains participants. Another point that continued to arise during the observation and interview phases of the research was the observation that no Anglo was seen performing maintenance staff work at River City. These positions were filled by Native and Hispanic persons. The Native students at River City appeared concerned when asked about this observation,

although none would elaborate on the issue.

In reviewing these emergent findings, the Two Mountains and the River City participants identified themselves as being more or less Navajo in terms of traditional beliefs and cultural practices. Those who worked or attended River City appeared to be more assimilated than those living on the reservation. The reservation Navajos were less likely to accept "the white man's way", and in some cases would not consider leaving the reservation even for work. The reservation remains isolated in many respects, but it is the comfort zone for many of the Two Mountains students and professional educators. As one of the participants stated: "...the reservation is our home, we can do our ceremonies here and raise our children our way. We do not have to live like the whites. The white way is not good for us Indians."

Summary of the Data Findings

Recall that the data for this project involved both secondary and primary approaches. The historical and content analysis phases of the study were based on information gathered by historians and institutional professionals. The observations and interviews were performed by the researcher who used the secondary data as

the foundation upon which questions were formulated and observations were contextualized.

In summarizing the findings, it would be difficult to say that the Native people of the area are on equal footing with the Anglo community economically and socially. Opportunity differentials continue to exist between the two groups. For the Navajo people who reside off the reservation and who work in the River City area as professionals or white collar workers, their lives appear much the same as those of the Anglo community. However, for reservation Navajos, isolation and poor economic opportunities appear to define everyday living.

It should be noted, the reservation Navajo are more likely to be the most traditional culturally and socially. Furthermore, this group is more accepting of their perceived status than non-reservation Navajos. Although their lives are more vulnerable economically than non-reservation Navajos, they are happy with their families nearby and their lifestyles. Based on the data findings, it does not appear that the traditional Navajo needs the Anglo cultural attributes of materialism, economic, or professional success in order to feel validated as a human being. Respect from family and community members and adherence to tribal ways

provide validation for the reservation Navajo. The following chapter will discuss the conclusions of the study as well as the implications for practice and the implications for future research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

> "Education is a necessity but its only good to a degree. We don't always agree with what they teach our kids-and don't teach 'em. The kids think there's something bad about bein' Navajo or Indian for that matter" (Joe Hosteen, 1997).

Introduction

The problem of this study focused on the low rates of participation in formalized educational settings among the Navajo adult population. Specifically, the purpose of this study centered on those cultural and institutional factors that either enhanced or inhibited a Navajo individual's participation in a two year community college setting.

Recall that the study's objectives were centered around four themes. These themes involved the following: 1) how was Navajo adult participation in the institutions under study actually measured; 2) what cultural issues appeared to enhance or inhibit Navajo adult participation; 3) what institutional structure factors appeared to enhance or inhibit Navajo adult participation; and 4) what institutional programs or activities appeared to enhance or inhibit Navajo adult participation.

Each of the four methods which were used to gather data

during the study were selected because of their potential for developing conclusions to the research objectives. Recall that the historical analysis provided the context or foundation upon which the remainder of the study was based. The content analysis phase provided the institutional data for the study, which was then used to determine what types of approaches each institution used to facilitate Navajo adult participation. The on-site observations and interviews provided the primary data which was then analyzed and evaluated to determine the perceived reasons for participation at both institutions by the population under study.

The next two sections of this chapter will reiterate the theoretical focus of the study, and relate this study's conclusions with the findings of other participation studies. Finally, the last section of this chapter will offer evaluative comments about this study's implications for educational practice among the Native American adult population and for future research.

The Theoretical Foundation Revisited

Recall that the critical perspective served as the theoretical focus for this study. Specifically, the works of Habermas, Freire, Ogbu, and Mezirow were all used as

points of reference. The basic tenets of the critical perspective according to Turner (1991) "actively seek to describe historical forces that continue to dominate human freedom and expose ideological justifications of those forces" (p. 257). Further, as Habermas suggested (1979) critical theory can work to motivate individuals in restoring the proper balance between individual life worlds and conflicting social processes.

As Mezirow stated (1985) "adult educators should have a function of helping adults free themselves from dependency producing constraints by assessing relevant experience...and fostering participation and leadership" (p. 149). Thus, the critical perspective should assist in not only explaining the societal implications of inequality, dominance, and subordination between groups in the various social institutions, but should work to eliminate these problems.

For example, as Ogbu (1990) has suggested, the impact of unequal educational opportunities for minority students has resulted in lost potential for American society. Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics traditionally have been the recipients of an education based on the Anglo model. This model does not always reflect the value or normative systems of these groups because the focus is traditionally on economic outcomes. Since economics serve

as the rationale for education in American society, the values of credentialing, job opportunities, and skill development are all stressed in the Anglo dominant educational structure. As a result, these three groups have been forced to assimilate, even though job potential is not as open for them as for Anglo students, or these group members "drop-out" of the educational system in America.

Involuntary minorities, "those who were incorporated into American society by force or coercion" (Ogbu, 1990, p. 157), perceive or interpret learning certain aspects of Anglo American culture, such as behaving according to White America's standards, as detrimental to their own cultures, languages, and identities. This has resulted in ambivalence toward learning, and conscious or unconscious opposition to anything Anglo. Thus, it has become imperative to remove those obstacles in society which impede minority group participation in education and other institutions in American culture.

Critical theory has provided the basis for an understanding of problems encountered by minority students. For the purposes of this study, this perspective was especially useful in developing an awareness of the differences in expectations, traditions, and behaviors between the Anglo and Navajo populations. Furthermore, the

critical perspective established the "lens" through which the data was gathered and analyzed. An ability to understand the issue of dominance and subordination was crucial to developing rapport with the Navajo participants in this study, and the critical perspective provided that understanding.

The critical perspective served as the background upon which the data were analyzed and evaluated. For example, the historical analysis of the Four-Corners region demonstrated that the Navajo people systematically have been the targets of discriminatory behavior and continue to confront negative stereotypes constructed by the Anglo population of the area.

The educational institutions under study also were best understood through the use of the critical perspective. The non-Native faculty and administration of the River City institution did not appear to fully understand the unique cultural differences between the Anglo student and the Navajo student. As a result, all too frequently, the Navajo student was viewed as non-motivated, dependent, and ill-prepared for post-secondary education. Thus, the critical perspective was an invaluable tool for this study by providing the basis upon which the aforementioned issues and similar others were evaluated.

Recalling Previous Participation Studies

Participation research has been a strong force in the field of adult and continuing education in recent decades. This research typically has centered around psychological and social themes. Rarely have cultural expectations or minority issues served as the focus for these studies. Furthermore, minority populations have not been included in these research efforts in proportion to their numbers in the overall American population. As a result, very little is actually known or understood about the minority adult participant in educational programs (Merriam and Cunningham, 1989).

For example, the large, national surveys conducted by the United States Department of Education have failed to adequately and consistently document adult participation among the various minority populations in the United States (United States Department of Education, 1991). Additionally, such national surveys as conducted by Johnstone and Rivera (1965) have not included a representative sample of adult minorities. As a result, minority adults are not well understood by the adult education community.

Smaller scale research efforts such as those carried out by Anderson and Darkenwald (1979), Darkenwald and

Valentine (1985), and Boshier (1971) have not included a representative number of minority adults within their respective research samples. While these types of studies have offered insight into possible reasons for participation among the adult population, or those possible explanations for non-participation, they have done little to explain why certain minority group members do not access adult education in proportion to their overall population numbers. This lack of knowledge about participation is also compounded by the fact that minority numbers are growing and their populations are becoming younger (Briscoe and Ross, 1989).

For the most part, participation research has focused on the characteristics of the average, majority participant. Basic demographic information, past educational activities, motivations for attendance, reasons for not attending and such have served as the focal point for participation research efforts. While this type of knowledge is helpful to scholars and practitioners alike, it has not helped in creating a better understanding of participation among minority populations. The middle-class, Anglo value system cannot serve to explain participation or non-participation among minority group members, specifically, Native American adults.

As stated previously, this research was designed for

the purpose of developing an understanding of the reasons for participation and non-participation among one specific minority group. The population for this study was the Navajo adult population in two community college settings. Thus, the study's conclusions will be discussed in the following section.

Concluding the Study

The historical data offered insight into the power differentials and socioeconomic contrasts which are experienced by the two primary populations of the Four-Corners area, the Anglo and the Navajo. The Navajo people have not enjoyed consistent equality of opportunity or access in this portion of the American Southwest since the advent of Anglo settlement. They have experienced becoming "children" of the federal government during the patriarchal period of Anglo-Indian relations. Additionally, the BIA has continued to govern many aspects of Navajo life, although the tribe has built on the "right to self-determination" issue in education and some facets of economic development. Moreover, the Anglo community continues to control business and industry in the area, while the Navajo population attempts to "survive" on very low per capita incomes and sporadic employment opportunities.

It appeared during the observational phase of the study that both cultural and racial differences have enabled the Anglo majority community opportunities to deny equal access to the Navajos in the area. River City is predominantly governed by Anglo business owners, industry leaders, and philanthropists. There are clear boundaries between the Anglo and Navajo neighborhoods of the community. Additionally, the large discount stores on the main highway through River City cater to the local Navajo population, while the downtown boutiques and small businesses predominantly serve the Anglo population, and is the economic hub of the region.

These examples demonstrate the marked stratification differences that exist between the Anglo and Navajo communities. Economically and socially, the Native population hovers near the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, even though federal law requires equality of opportunity and access.

In terms of education, the differences between the River City institution and the Two Mountains institution reflect the socioeconomic differences that exist between the Anglo and Navajo populations. The traditional Navajo student population expressed feelings of alienation and cultural confusion at the River City institution, but

explained that they felt a heightened sense of self and group identity at the Two Mountains campus. Furthermore, the traditional Native students continually voiced concern about the "sense of identity loss" when faced with leaving the comforts associated with their tribal homes such as leaving the reservation for work in River City or elsewhere.

The two institutions demonstrated clear evidence as to their perceived missions. The Two Mountains facility focused the curriculum entirely around the Navajo philosophy of living. Students at Two Mountains were encouraged to practice the Navajo language and Navajo arts and crafts. Faculty at Two Mountains were expected to appreciate the Navajo lifestyle, and were encouraged to assist students in overcoming logistical problems. Furthermore, the Two Mountains campus did not focus educational programming on the facilitation of job acquisition away from the reservation, rather, the students were taught to cooperate with each other and support their families and communities. The Navajo people do not place a great deal of emphasis on material acquisition or monetary gain for individual happiness. Success and happiness are equated with family well-being, and individual harmony with the earth and the tribe. The Two Mountains institution worked diligently in promoting these Navajo ideals through cooperative learning

and ongoing student counseling.

River City's institutional mission equated educational success with job skill development and four year degree completion. The River City faculty were encouraged to teach those skills necessary for job placement in the business sector. It was evident that the River City administration worked closely with the area's business community in developing programming and curriculum. Students were perceived as potential labor force members. Native philosophies were not the focus of the River City mission. Additionally, Native students at River City appeared to exhibit a greater degree of assimilation and less cultural confusion than the more traditional Navajo population at Two Mountains.

In terms of institutional programs and activities that appeared to facilitate enrollment and retention among the Navajo population, there were several significant points raised. Each of the two institutions worked with the Navajo tribe for the purposes of acquiring financial aid for the Navajo student population. Additionally, Native Bridge programs were in place at both institutions, which assisted Navajo high school students in making the transition from high school to post-secondary education. Also, each institution did have a fully operational Native students

office, which provided counseling and advisement to all Native students regardless of tribal affiliation.

Clearly, appropriate advisement and counseling, as well as, timely financial aid acquisition appeared to facilitate the educational process of the Navajo student population. The retention rates of Navajo students, however, did differ significantly between the two institutions under study. Based on the interview data, the Two Mountains institution maintained those Native practices and beliefs which were viewed as congruent with personal expectations of education. This issue appeared to encourage continued enrollment. The River City institution did not provide for the practice of Native customs, thus, some students could not develop a sense of belongingness and eventually dropped out of the River City institution.

Furthermore, the River City faculty were not expected to understand Native student needs, rather they were provided with a minimal amount of in-service preparation on Native issues. While all post-secondary students face problems of a logistical nature, the traditional Navajo student is unaccustomed to individualized decision making and found it difficult to plan for future needs or control external problems such as transportation and child care. The Two Mountains faculty and administration were

understanding of these issues and maintained a greater degree of flexibility regarding student problems.

In summary, the conclusions of this study indicate that while many Navajo adult students did express some of the same barriers to and motivations for accessing post-secondary education as the average majority adult education student there are distinct cultural issues that warrant discussion. For example, Cross (1981) developed a three-part categorization for non-participation which included such issues as dispositional, institutional, and situtational barriers for non-participation in adult education.

Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) added a fourth category referred to as informational. More specifically, Valentine and Darkenwald (1990) maintained that the barriers to participation include such issues as "lack of confidence, cost, lack of interest, and personal problems" (p. 39). Clearly, from the evidence gathered throughout the study, these issues do amount to "barriers" to participation for the Navajo adult student population. However, the effect of cultural issues underlies non-participation as well. The next subsection of this chapter will more specifically address these problems.

Retention and Post-Degree Program Issues

While lack of confidence and personal problems were verbalized as reasons why some Navajo adult students did not pursue post-secondary opportunities, the real concern appears to lie with retention and completion of a program of study. The Navajo population in this study did perceive post-secondary education as a worthwhile endeavor, however, the issue that continually arose was post-degree opportunity.

Many of the interviewed Navajo students expressed concern about their respective futures after they had earned a degree. They did not want to leave their homes or their families, but job opportunities on the reservation are dismal at best. Thus, many vocalized perceived confusion about education's merits in the long run. Clearly, the apparent racial and cultural opportunity differentials that do exist in the region provide plenty of reason for doubt within the Navajo student population.

Concomitantly, the Navajo student population at Two Mountains did experience a much higher retention rate than the River City institution. Thus, the issue of culture clearly plays into whether a Navajo student will in fact complete a program of study. By learning and practicing the Navajo way of living while also acquiring the course work

necessary to complete a degree plan, the Two Mountains student population experienced less anxiety about their post-degree futures.

The River City institution did not provide this area of "comfort" to the Native students. One result of this problem appeared to be a much lower retention rate. River City demonstrated a forty-one percent retention rate compared to Two Mountains' retention rate of eighty-eight percent.

The institutional focus of Two Mountains was not created specifically for program completion, rather, the intent is on retention of Navajo students. Again, the "Indian Time" factor appears to create a climate of comfort for the Navajo student population. Unlike the institutional mission at River City, where program completion and expanded offerings are equated with progress, Two Mountains perpetuates the Navajo philosophy that time is less important than learning about one's culture and traditions. The emphasis at Two Mountains is more on the cultural expectations of family and community and less on degree plan progress. Thus, the institutional focus at River City is not entirely consistent with the Navajo view of progress.

On a final note, the conclusions of this study have demonstrated that racism and inequality appear to continue

to create barriers to full participation in adult education within the Navajo adult student population. Although numerous federal acts have mandated compliance with affirmative action and equal employment opportunities, the Navajo population of the Four Corners region continues to experience unequal access and opportunity.

These issues are societal issues as well as educational ones. Individual participation in adult education appears to have less to do with personal motivations and needs than with a perception of societal position and life experiences. Thus, Navajo adult participation in organized adult education programs appears to be predicated on cultural and community expectations as well as family perception of educational importance. The next sub-section of this research will focus on implications, both for practice and for research.

Implications for Practice and Research

Implications for Practice

The implications for practice that have emerged from this study center around the issue of culture. For example, in order for institutions and practitioners of adult education to adequately provide for the post-secondary needs

of adult Native students, it appears that significant detail must be paid to Native student cultural expectations in addition to individual personal needs and motivations.

The first implication focuses on the issue of programming and institutional planning. Programming efforts should utilize tribal leaders in planning and implementation because the Anglo-European models of perceived need cannot be viewed as congruent with those of the Native community. Cultural differences regarding job acquisition and professional development exist between Native populations and the Anglo majority community.

Further, because the vast majority of educators of adults are Anglo, the development of an increased awareness of cultural differentials is imperative. On a cautionary note however, practitioners should also be aware that a single Native philosophy does not exist. Each tribe will express perceived differences in behavioral expectations and value systems, although there are many similarities among the many Native tribes.

A second major implication is concerned with delivery methods. Native adult students frequently enter the post-secondary setting with poor academic training (Beaty and Beaty-Chiste, 1986). Remedial programs and culturally sensitive counseling and advisement are necessary in order

to retain the older, second-chance, Native student. Instructors should also be sensitized to the external needs of Native students, which often are beyond their control. Family and community support have been perceived by the Navajo adult student as important influences, and should be recognized as such by faculty and staff alike.

Finally, based on the conclusions of this study, it appears that increased funding for the development of tribal colleges may positively affect the overall participation levels of the adult Native student population. Traditional Native adult students will more likely access post-secondary education if tribally affiliated institutions were to become more accessible.

The issue of accessibility to tribally operated and governed institutions is more easily understood when studying the overall impact of the Navajo Community College system on the Navajo adult student population. Prior to 1968, when the Navajo Community College system opened its doors, only a small percentage of the Navajo population ever completed a post-secondary degree (Navajo Community College Report, 1994-1995). Currently, the tribe receives 15,000 financial aid applications every year. This fact suggests that greater numbers of adult Navajos are participating in some type of educational program. Thus, in terms of

practice, cultural issues permeate all aspects of Native adult participation in education. Foremost among the implications though, lies such problems as accessibility, delivery methods and programming.

Implications for Research

The implications for research are varied, but tend to center around the cultural issue as well. For example, much of the research regarding adult education participation is predicated on the Anglo majority model. Questionnaire development and dissemination are based on Anglo perceptions of needs, barriers, and motivations. These perceptions may or may not adequately address the cultural expectations of Native students. Thus, research findings from such national studies as the Johnstone and Rivera project (1965) and the United States Department of Education (1982) do not fully address the unique perceptions of the various racial and ethnic minority populations and specifically the Native population.

The second major implication for research involves the issue of knowledge development about racial and ethnic minority adults. Participation studies must work to access the growing minority populations in the United States if increased participation is desired. However, the positivist

models of sampling and access to respondents typically will not work well with disenfranchised groups.

For example, telephone surveys, mail-out surveys, and job related surveys will only access a small percentage of any minority group. Specifically, the Navajo population has a very low rate of telephone usage in the home. Less than half of all Navajo households have a working telephone (Navajo Nation Profiles, 1995). Furthermore, many reservation households do not have access to daily or even weekly mail delivery. Isolated reservation households will typically receive mail at the nearest trading post. These issues can create low response rates for any type of mail-out survey.

Another important issue regarding participation research involves language and literacy. In terms of the Native and Hispanic communities, researchers should not assume that the English language can be read and understood. Thus, the traditional survey methods again can create problems in accessing information and in response rates. For example, the Navajo language is widely used on the reservation by both young and old. While the younger members of the Navajo tribe have experienced education in the English language, many older members have not experienced any type of formalized education and will not be

capable of understanding questionnaires which use the English language.

In summary, the implications for research vary from such practical issues of sampling and data gathering to the more complex issue of the overall purpose of adult education for racial and ethnic minorities. If the purpose of adult education is to provide opportunities for personal growth and greater job or professional advancement, among many other things, then the question remains unanswered as to why minority adults continue to exhibit low rates of participation.

Specifically, this study suggests that program goals and objectives, which are based on the Anglo majority model, may not fully address the specialized or unique needs of minority group members. As a result, this may explain why participation rates among the Navajo, as in this study, remain low at the institutions administered by Anglos.

Organized adult education must be responsive to the specific needs of targeted groups. Programming direction that has been based on superimposed needs by non-minority administrators or practitioners will likely fail. Furthermore, any attempt to increase participation levels among minority populations will require an awareness of the perceived outcomes of a program of study. Particularly, the

perceived outcomes must be congruent with cultural expectations and values.

This research effort was designed to be exploratory in its approach. There is very little published research available on minority adults, and specifically certain groups such as the Navajo. With these issues in mind, further research may possibly lead to greater explanations for non-participation among the Navajo. Moreover, other research efforts should target specific racial and ethnic groups as well so as to more fully develop the existing knowledge base on minority participation in adult education.

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APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE FACTORS ASSESSMENT TOOL

1. Institutional current FTE
2. Average student age
3. Number of degree programs offered
4. Average number of years per student to reach graduation
5. On-campus living quarters offered
6. Gender composition of total FTE
7. Ethnic composition of total FTE
8. Average student age upon graduation
9. Total number of full-time faculty
10. Total number of adjunct faculty
11. Student to faculty ratio
12. Percentage breakdown of financial aid sources
13. Percentage breakdown of financial aid receipients
14. Gender, race and ethnicity of all faculty
15. "Bridge Programs" in place
16. Retention programs in place
17. Native Studies program and full-time director
18. Pre-Service training for all faculty
19. Tribal outreach programs in place
20. Mission statement reflects inclusiveness
21. Sources of institutional funding and current levels
22. Retention rates for all students

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Each of the following questions are open-ended, and are designed to elicit personal experience and opinion. They are also designed to invoke greater thought and each participant is encouraged to offer any additional information that they may believe relative.

1. Could you explain what customs, beliefs, or behaviors that are unique to the Navajo culture could be seen as encouragements or motivators for Navajo adults to go to school?

2. What types of problems come to mind about the Navajo culture that discourage or cause barriers for Navajo adults when it comes to attending school or getting a college education?

3. How does Navajo family life view education for adults? Tell me your experiences--your background.

4. How can the education of adults benefit or harm the Navajo Nation in your opinion?

5. What types of programs, policies, or activities do you think help bring Navajo adults to education?

6. How can educational institutions help Navajo students in terms of course offerings, teaching practices and such?

7. What types of issues could an educational institution change that would better serve the Navajo adult student?

Appendix C

Institutional Review Board

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: 07-03-96 **IRB#:** ED-96-137

Proposal Title: NATIVE AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION: THE IMPACT OF STRUCTURAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS

Principal Investigator(s): Robert Nolan, Kay Decker

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING THE APPROVAL PERIOD.
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR A ONE CALENDAR YEAR PERIOD AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.
ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature: _____ Date: July 5, 1996
Chair of Institutional Review Board

To Whom It May Concern,

The title of the dissertation has been changed to better reflect the nature of the study. The methods and objectives did remain the same. The study was approved in 1996 and was completed in 1997.

Sincerely,

Kay L. Decker

VITA

Kay L. Decker

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: NAVAJO ADULT EDUCATION: A COMPARISON OF TWO INSTITUTIONS

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born to Roy and Loretta Decker in Alva, Oklahoma, on February 5, 1960.

Education: Graduated from Alva High School, Alva, Oklahoma in 1978. Graduated from Northwestern Oklahoma State University in 1986 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science Education. Graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1988 with a Master of Science degree in Sociology. Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree with a major in Occupational and Adult Education at Oklahoma State University in December, 1997.

Experience: Employed as a Case Manager for Eldercare of Northwest Oklahoma 1987 to 1990; Promoted to Program Coordinator for Eldercare of Northwest Oklahoma 1990 to 1991; Adjunct Instructor of Sociology at Northwestern Oklahoma State University 1989 to 1991; Promoted to Assistant Professor of Sociology at Northwestern Oklahoma State University 1991 to present.

Professional Memberships: Phi Alpha Theta, American Sociological Association, Southwest Social Science Association.